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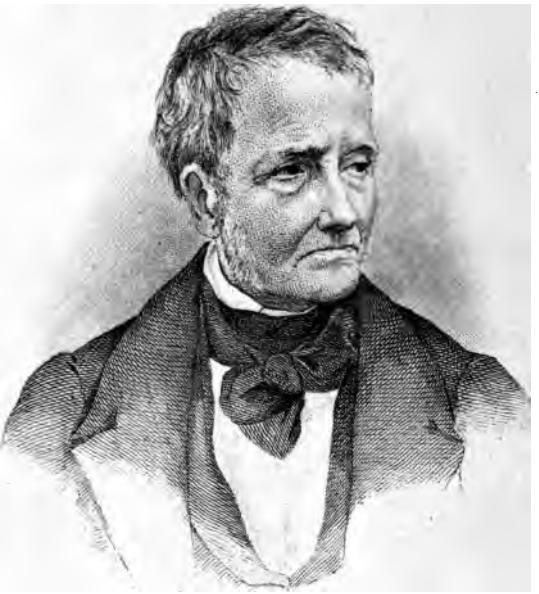
OF

THOMAS DE QUINCEY.



Very truly yours,
Thomas de Quincey.

Dawson Ph. Sc.

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THE UNCOLLECTED WRITINGS

OF

THOMAS DE QUINCEY.

WITH

A PREFACE AND ANNOTATIONS

BY

JAMES HOGG.

IN TWO VOLUMES. VOL. I.

NEW YORK:
SCRIBNER AND WELFORD.
LONDON: SWAN SONNENSCHEIN & CO.
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PREFACE.

'*The last fruit off an old tree!*' This, in the words of WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR, is what I have now the honour to set before the public in these hitherto 'UNCOLLECTED WRITINGS OF THOMAS DE QUINCEY.'

It was my privilege to be associated intimately with the Author some thirty to forty years ago—from the beginning of 1850 until his death in 1859.* Throughout the whole period during which he was engaged in preparing for the Press his *Selections Grave and Gay*, I assisted in the task.

Of the singularly pleasant literary intercourse of that memorable time I have given some reminiscences in *Harper's Magazine* for this month. I may yet combine in a Volume with these some amusing, scholarly letters in my possession, and a Selection of Papers from the original sources, which I feel warranted, by the Author's own estimate, in calling *De Quincey's Choice Works*. Meantime, in dealing with the various Essays and Stories here gathered together, I limit myself to such notes as are necessary to point

* DE QUINCEY, LEIGH HUNT, and MACAULAY all died in that year.

out the special circumstances under which some of the papers were written; in others the nature of the evidence I have found as to the indisputable authorship.

My special opportunities, derived from constant companionship and the continuous discussion with DE QUINCEY of matters concerning his writings, gave me the key to some of the admirable papers here reprinted. It also entitles me to say, that he would have included a number of them in his Collected Works alongside the *Suspiria de Profundis* (Sighs from the Depths), had he lived to continue his labours.

When we find that most part of the *Suspiria*—perhaps the highest reach of his intellect in impassioned power—did not appear in the *Selections* at all, the reader will at once understand that, in the Author's own opinion, the Essays and Stories now first collected, were neither less dignified in purpose nor less finished in style than those which had passed under his hand in the fourteen volumes he nearly completed. Rather like the *Suspiria*, some of these papers were reserved as material upon the revision of which his energy might be fitly bestowed when health would permit.

The interesting papers which appeared in *Tait's Magazine* are all duly vouched for in that periodical. I have not touched any of the autobiographical matter which appeared in *Tait*,—the Author having recast that as well as the *Sketches from Childhood*, published in *The Instructor* in the 'Autobiographic Sketches'

with which he opened the *Selections*. *The Casuistry of Duelling*, indeed, appeared in *Tait* as part of the Autobiographic Series, but, practically, it stood as an independent paper. The touching personal passage in this article reveals the misery caused by the unbridled scurrility of certain notorious publications of the last generation.

The paper on *The German Language* appeared in *Tait* in June 1836, and the *Brief Appraisal of Greek Literature* in December 1838 and June 1839.

Two long and valuable papers on *Education; Plans for the Instruction of Boys in Large Numbers*, which appeared in *The London Magazine* for April and May, 1824, were duly authenticated by the following characteristic letter from DE QUINCEY to CHRISTOPHER NORTH. It appears in *Professor Wilson's Life*, written by his daughter, MRS. GORDON:—

'*London, Thursday, February 24th*, 1825.

'MY DEAR WILSON,

'I write to you on the following occasion:—Some time ago, perhaps nearly two years ago, Mr. Hill, a lawyer, published a book on Education, detailing a plan on which his brothers had established a school at Hazlewood, in Warwickshire. This book I reviewed in the *London Magazine*, and in consequence received a letter of thanks from the Author, who, on my coming to London about midsummer last year, called on me. I have since become intimate with

him, and, excepting that he is a sad Jacobin (as I am obliged to tell him once or twice a month), I have no one fault to find with him, for he is a very clever, amiable, good creature as ever existed; and in particular directions his abilities strike me as really very great indeed. Well, his book has just been reviewed in the last *Edinburgh Review* (of which some copies have been in town about a week). This service has been done him, I suppose, *through* some of his political friends—(for he is connected with Brougham, Lord Lansdowne, old Bentham, etc.),—but I understand *by* Mr. Jeffrey. Mr. Hill, in common with multitudes in this Babylon—who will not put their trust in Blackwood as in God (which, you know, he ought to do)—yet privately adores him as the Devil; and indeed publicly too, is a great *prôneur* of Blackwood. For, in spite of his Jacobinism, he is liberal and inevitably just to real wit. His fear is—that Blackwood may come as Nemesis, and compel him to regorge any puffing and cramming which Tiff has put into his pocket, and is earnest to have a letter addressed in an influential quarter to prevent this. I alleged to him that I am not quite sure but it is an affront to a Professor to presume that he has any connection as contributor, or anything else, to any work which he does not publicly avow as his organ for communicating with the world of letters. He answers that it would be so in him,—but that an old friend may write *sub rosa*. I rejoin that I know not but you may have cut Blackwood—even as a sub-

scriber—a whole lustrum ago. He rebuts, by urging a just compliment paid to you, as a supposed contributor, in the *News of Literature and Fashion*, but a moon or two ago. Seriously, I have told him that I know not what was the extent of your connection with Blackwood at *any* time; and that I conceive the labours of your Chair in the University must now leave you little leisure for any but occasional contributions, and therefore for no regular cognizance of the work as director, etc. However, as all that he wishes—is simply an interference to save him from any very severe article, and not an article in his favour, I have ventured to ask of you if you hear of any such thing, to use such influence as must naturally belong to you in your general character (whether maintaining any connection with Blackwood or not) to get it softened. On the whole, I suppose no such article is likely to appear. But to oblige Hill I make the application. He has no *direct* interest in the prosperity of Hazlewood; he is himself a barrister in considerable practice, and of some standing, I believe; but he takes a strong paternal interest in it, all his brothers (who are accomplished young men, I believe) being engaged in it. They have already had one shock to stand: a certain Mr. Place, a Jacobin friend of the School till just now, having taken the pet with it—and removed his sons. Now, this Mr. Place, who was formerly a tailor—leather-breeches maker and habit-maker,—having made a fortune and finished his studies,—is become

an immense authority as a political and reforming head with Bentham, etc., as also with the *Westminster Review*, in which quarter he is supposed to have the weight of nine times nine men; whence, by the way, in the "circles" of the booksellers, the Review has got the name of the *Breeches Review*.' * * * [The writer then passes on to details of his own plans and prospects, and thus concludes.]

'I beg my kind regards to Mrs. Wilson and my young friends, whom I remember with so much interest as I last saw them at Elleray.—I am, my dear Wilson,

'Very affectionately yours,

'THOMAS DE QUINCEY.'

In approaching the consideration of other papers said, in various quarters (with some show of authority) to have been written by DE QUINCEY, it was necessary to act with extreme care. One was a painstaking list on the whole, but very inaccurate as regards certain contributions attributed to DE QUINCEY in *Blackwood*. I have had the kind aid of MESSRS. BLACKWOOD in examining the archives of *Maga* to settle the points in question.

I was puzzled by some papers in *The London Magazine* set down as DE QUINCEY'S contributions in a memorandum said to have been furnished by MESSRS. TAYLOR and HESSEY, its Publishers. The *Blackwood* blunders made me very sceptical. There

was one story in particular—the long droll one of *Mr. Schnackenberger; or, Two Masters to one Dog*, about which I remained in doubt.

I had a faint recollection that one day DE QUINCEY dwelt on the merits of 'JUNO,' and owned the story when he was discussing 'bull-dogs.'

By the way, he was rather fond of 'bull-dogs,' and had some good anecdotes about them. It was a kind of pet-admiration-horror which he shared with SOUTHEY, on account of the difficulty in making a well-bred bull-dog relax his grip. Some member of the canine 'fancy' down at the Lakes had given them a so-called infallible 'tip' for making a bull-dog let go. I am sorry to say I have quite forgotten this admirable receipt. To be sure, one ought never to forget such valuable pieces of information. So I thought one day lately before the muzzling order came into force, when a bloodthirsty monster,—a big, white bull-dog, sprang suddenly at me in Cleveland Gardens. Instantly there flashed the thought—what was it that DE QUINCEY recommended? A lucky lunge which drove the ferule of my umbrella down the brute's throat fortunately created a diversion, and allowed a little more time for the study of the problem. Perhaps I will be pardoned this digression, as it affords an opportunity of recording the fact that DE QUINCEY and SOUTHEY both looked up to the bull-dog as an animal of very decided 'character.'

I was loth to abandon *Mr. Schnackenberger*, but

unwilling to lean too much on my somewhat hazy remembrance. It seemed almost hopeless to obtain the necessary evidence. MESSRS. TAYLOR and HESSEY were long dead, and after groping about like a detective, no one could tell me what had become of the records of *The London Magazine.* Suddenly there came light in October last. I ascertained that a son of one of the Publishers is the ARCHDEACON of MIDDLESEX, the Venerable J. A. HESSEY, D.C.L.

I stated the case, and the worthy ARCHDEACON came most kindly and promptly to my assistance. As a boy he remembered DE QUINCEY at his father's house, and recollected very well reading *Mr. Schnackenberger.* He informed me, 'I was greatly interested in the [London] Magazine generally, so much so, that, at my father's request, I copied from his private list, and attached to the head of each paper the name of the Author. . . This interesting set came to me at my father's death.'

DR. HESSEY had subsequently presented the series to his old pupil, MR. WILLIAM CAREW HAZLITT (by whose courtesy I have been able to examine it)—'the grandson of WILLIAM HAZLITT, who was a frequent writer in the Magazine, and an old friend of my father. I thought he would like to possess it, and that it would thus be in fitting hands. I should not have parted with it in favour of any but a man like MR. HAZLITT, who was sure to value it.'

As these valuable annotations of the ARCHDEACON ramify in various directions—touching as they do the

contributions of many brilliant men of that period—it may not be amiss (as a possible help to others in the future) to add a few more decisive words by DR. HESSEY :—

'If any papers are not marked (he refers only to those volumes actually published by MESSRS. TAYLOR and HESSEY) it was because they were anonymous, or because, from some inadvertency, they were not assigned in my father's list. *So far as the record goes, it may be depended upon.*'

By its help I was able to fix the authorship by DE QUINCEY of (1) *The Dog Story*—translated from the German, (2) *Moral Effects of Revolutions*, (3) *Prefigurations of Remote Events*, (4) *Abstract of Swedenborgianism by Immanuel Kant.*

Another perplexing element was the letter written by DE QUINCEY to his uncle, COLONEL PENSON, in 1819 (PAGE'S *Life*, vol. i. p. 207), wherein reference is made to certain contributions to *Blackwood's Magazine* and *The Quarterly Review.*

The archives of *Maga* I find go back only as far as 1825. As to *The Quarterly Review*, I have MR. MURRAY'S authority for stating that DE QUINCEY never wrote a line in it. Whether any contributions were ever commissioned, paid for, and afterwards suppressed, I have been unable to ascertain. As a matter of fact, the *Schiller* Series referred to in the letter to COLONEL PENSON was never reviewed in *The Quarterly* at all.

DE QUINCEY as a Newspaper Editor forms the subject of a Chapter in PAGE'S *Life*. Some extracts are there given from cuttings out of *The Westmorland Gazette* found amongst the Author's Papers. This editorship (1818-19) was of short duration, and pursued under hostile circumstances, such as distance from the Press, *&c.*, which soon led to DE QUINCEY'S resignation. I had hoped to add some further specimens of the newspaper work, but have not, as yet, obtained access to a file of the period. In any future edition I may be able to add this in an Appendix.

The Love-Charm. — In spite of the marvellous tenacity of DE QUINCEY'S memory, even as to the very words of a passage in an Author which he had, perhaps, only *once* read, there were *blanks* which confounded himself. One of these bore on his contributions to KNIGHT'S *Quarterly Magazine*. MR. FIELDS had been so generally careful in obtaining sufficient authority for what he published, in the original American edition, that DE QUINCEY good-humouredly gave the verdict against himself, and 'supposed he *must* be wrong' in thinking that some of these special papers were not from his pen. Still,—he demurred, and before including them in *The Selections Grave and Gay*, it was resolved to institute an inquiry. Accordingly, about 1852, I was deputed to interview MR. CHARLES KNIGHT, and request his aid. My mission was to obtain, if

possible, a correct list of the various contributions to the *Quarterly Magazine*, including this *Love-Charm*.

Mr. Knight, Mr. Ramsay (his first lieutenant, as he called him), and myself all met at Fleet Street, where we had the archives of the old *Quarterly Magazine* turned up, and a list checked. I lately found this particular story also referred to circumstantially in the annexed paragraph contained in Charles Knight's *Passages of a Working Life* (Thorne's re-issue, vol. I. chap. x. p. 339).

'De Quincey had written to me in December 1824, in the belief that, as he expressed it, "many of your friends will rally about you, and urge you to some new undertaking of the same kind. If that should happen, I beg to say, that you may count upon me, as one of your men, for any extent of labour, to the best of my power, which you may choose to command." He wrote a translation of *The Love-Charm* of Tieck, with a notice of the Author. This is not reprinted in his Collected Works, though perhaps it is the most interesting of his translations from the German. In this spring and summer De Quincey and I were in intimate companionship. It was a pleasant time of intellectual intercourse for me.'

There is no doubt *The Love-Charm* would have been reprinted had the Author lived to carry the *Selections* farther.

The curious little Essay *On Novels*,—written in a Lady's Album, had passed out of Mr. Davey's hands

before I became aware of its existence. The *facsimile*, however, taken for *The Archivist*, by an expert like MR. NETHERCLIFT, shows that it is, unquestionably, in the handwriting of DE QUINCEY. I have been unable to trace the 'FAIR INCOGNITA' to whom it was addressed.

The compositions which were written for me when I edited *Titan*, and which I now place before the public in volume form, after the lapse of a whole generation (thirty-three years, to speak 'by the card'), demand some special comment, particularly in their relation to the *Selections Grave and Gay*.

Titan was a half-crown monthly Magazine, a continuation in an enlarged form of *The Instructor*. I had become the acting Editor of its predecessor, *the New Series* of *The Instructor*, working in concert with my Father, the proprietor. In this *New Series* there appeared from DE QUINCEY'S pen *The Sphinx's Riddle*, *Judas Iscariot*, the Series of *Sketches from Childhood*, and other notable papers.

At that time I was but a young editor—young and, perhaps, a little 'curly,' as LORD BEACONSFIELD put it. DE QUINCEY, with a truly paternal solicitude, gave me much good advice and valuable help, both in the selection of subjects for the Magazine and in the mode of handling them. The notes on *The Lake Dialect*, *Shakspere's Text and Suetonius Unravelled*, were written to me in the form of Letters, and published in *Titan*.

Storms in English History was a consideration of part of MR. FROUDE'S well-known book, which on its publication made a great stir in the literary world, and profoundly impressed DE QUINCEY.

How to write English was the first of a series projected for *The Instructor*. It never got beyond this 'Introduction,' but the fragment contains some matter well worthy of preservation.

The circumstances attending the composition of the four papers on *The English in India* and *The English in China* I have explained at some length in the introductory notices attached to them.

And now for a confession! The 'gentle reader' may, perhaps, feel a momentary inclination to blame me when I reveal, that I rather stood in the way of some brilliant articles which were very seriously considered at this period.

DE QUINCEY was eager to write them, and I should have been glad indeed to have had them for *Titan*, but for a fear of allowing the Author to wander too far from the ever-present and irksome *Works*. Any possible escape—even through other downright hard work, from this perplexing labour was joyfully hailed by him as a hopeful chance of obtaining a prosperous holiday.

For a little I wavered under the temptation (Reader, —was it not great?)—the idea of having a little relaxation which would permit some, at least, of these well-planned papers to be written. But I was keenly alive to the danger which overtook us at last.

We are daily reminded that 'art is long and life is short.' I had already saved the *Works* from being strangled at their birth in a legal tussle with MR. JOHN TAYLOR.* My Father was at my elbow anxiously inquiring about the progress of the 'copy' for each succeeding volume. There were eager friends also, on both sides of the Atlantic, pressing resolutely for it. So—prudence prevailed, and we held as straightly on our way as the Author's uncertain health would permit.

Thus it came to pass, dear Public, that you lost some charming essays, while you gained the fourteen volumes of the *Selections* which the Author all but completed.

Wherefore, seeing that you may possibly expect it of me to make some use of my rare opportunities by doing whatever I can in these matters, 'before the night cometh,'—I have prepared this book—*ohne hast, ohne rast.*

I cannot close these few pages better than by quoting some strong, just, sympathetic words which appeared in two great reviews—one American, the other British.

The North American Review said:—

'In DE QUINCEY we are struck at once by the exquisite refinement of mind, the subtleness of association, and the extreme tenuity of the threads of

* This incident was a complicated contention, concerning the copyright of *The Confessions*, in which DE QUINCEY had long allowed his rights to lie dormant. It was at last happily settled in an amicable manner.

thought, the gossamer filaments yet finally weaving themselves together, and thickening imperceptibly into a strong and expanded web. Mingled with this, and perhaps springing from a similar mental habit, is an occasional dreaminess both in speculation and in narrative, when the mind seems to move vaguely round in vast returning circles. The thoughts catch hold of nothing, but are heaved and tossed like masses of cloud by the wind. An incident of trivial import is turned and turned to catch the light of every possible consequence, and so magnified as to become portentous and terrible.'

* * * * *

'A barren and trivial fact, under the power of that life-giving hand, shoots out on all sides into waving branches and green leaves, and odoriferous flowers. It is not the fact that interests us, but the mind working upon it, investing it with mock-heroic dignity, or rendering it illustrative of really serious principles; or, with the true insight of genius, discovering, in that which a vulgar eye would despise, the germs of grandeur and beauty; the passions of war in the contests of the rival factions of schoolboys, the tragedy in every peasant's death-bed.'

* * * * *

'De Quincey constantly amazes us by the amount and diversity of his learning. Two or three of the minor papers in the collected volumes are absolutely loaded with the life spoils of their author's scholarship, yet carry their burden as lightly as our bodies sustain

the weight of the circumambient atmosphere. So perfect is his tact in finding, or rather making a place for everything, that, while inviting, he eludes the charge of pedantry.'

* * * * *

'It is scarcely to be expected that one who tries his hand at so many kinds of pencraft should always excel; yet such is the force of DE QUINCEY'S intellect, the brilliancy of his imagination, and the charm of his style, that he throws a new and peculiar interest over every subject which he discusses, while his fictitious narratives in general rivet the attention of the reader with a power not easily resisted.'

The Quarterly Review said:—

'DE QUINCEY'S style is superb, his powers of reasoning unsurpassed, his imagination is warm and brilliant, and his humour both masculine and delicate.'

The writer continues:—

'A great master of English composition, a critic of uncommon delicacy, an honest and unflinching investigator of received opinions, a philosophic inquirer—DE QUINCEY has departed from us full of years, and left no successor to his rank. The exquisite finish of his style, with the scholastic vigour of his logic, form a combination which centuries may never reproduce, but which every generation should study as one of the marvels of English Literature.'

JAMES HOGG.

London, February, 1890.

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In Reason
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A BRIEF APPRAISAL OF THE GREEK LITERATURE IN ITS FOREMOST PRETENSIONS:

By way of Counsel to Adults who are hesitating as to the Propriety of Studying the Greek Language with a view to the Literature; and by way of consolation to those whom circumstances have obliged to lay aside that plan.

No. I.

No question has been coming up at intervals for reconsideration more frequently than that which respects the comparative pretensions of Pagan (viz. Greek and Roman) Literature on the one side, and Modern (that is, the Literature of Christendom) on the other. Being brought uniformly before unjust tribunals—that is, tribunals corrupted and bribed by their own vanity—it is not wonderful that this great question should have been stifled and overlaid with peremptory decrees, dogmatically cutting the knot rather than skilfully untying it, as often as it has been moved afresh, and put upon the roll for a rehearing. It is no mystery to those who are in the secret, and who can lay A and B together, why it should have happened that the most interesting of all literary questions, and the most comprehensive (for

it includes most others, and some special to itself), has, in the first place, never been pleaded in a style of dignity, of philosophic precision, of feeling, or of research, proportioned to its own merits, and to the numerous 'issues' (forensically speaking) depending upon it; nor, in the second place, has ever received such an adjudication as was satisfactory *even at the moment*. For, be it remembered, after all, that any provisional adjudication—one growing out of the fashion or taste of a single era—could not, at any rate, be binding for a different era. A judgment which met the approbation of Spenser could hardly have satisfied Dryden; nor another which satisfied Pope, have been recognised as authentic by us of the year 1838. It is the normal or exemplary condition of the human mind, its ideal condition, not its abnormal condition, as seen in the transitory modes and fashions of its taste or its opinions, which only

'Can lay great bases for eternity,'

or give even a colourable permanence to any decision in a matter so large, so perplexed, so profound, as this great pending suit between antiquity and ourselves—between the junior men of this earth and ourselves, the seniors, as Lord Bacon reasonably calls us. Appeals will be brought *ad infinitum*—we ourselves shall bring appeals, to set aside any judgment that may be given, until something more is consulted than individual taste; better evidence brought forward than the result of individual reading; something higher laid down as the *grounds* of judgment, as the very principles of the jurisprudence which controls the court, than those vague *responsa prudentum*,

countersigned by the great name, perhaps, of Aristotle, but still too often mere products of local convenience, of inexperience, of experience too limited and exclusively Grecian, or of absolute caprice—rules, in short, which are themselves not less truly *sub judice* and liable to appeal than that very appeal cause to which they are applied as decisive.

We have remarked, that it is no mystery why the decision should have gone pretty uniformly in favour of the ancients; for here is the dilemma:—A man, attempting this problem, *is* or *is not* a classical scholar. If he *is*, then he has already received a bias in his judgment; he is a bribed man, bribed by his vanity; and is liable to be challenged as one of the judges. If he is *not*, then he is but imperfectly qualified—imperfectly as respects his knowledge and powers; whilst, even as respects his will and affections, it may be alleged that he also is under a bias and a corrupt influence; his interest being no less obvious to undervalue a literature, which, as to *him*, is tabooed and under lock and key, than his opponent's is to put a preposterous value upon that knowledge which very probably is the one sole advantageous distinction between him and his neighbours.

We might cite an illustration from the French literary history on this very point. Every nation in turn has had its rows in this great quarrel, which is, in fact, co-extensive with the controversies upon human nature itself. The French, of course, have had *theirs*—solemn tournaments, single duels, casual 'turn-ups,' and regular 'stand-up' fights. The most celebrated of these was in the beginning of the last

century, when, amongst others who acted as bottle-holders, umpires, &c., two champions in particular 'peeled' and fought a considerable number of rounds, mutually administering severe punishment, and both coming out of the ring disfigured: these were M. la Motte and Madame Dacier. But Motte was the favourite at first, and once he got Dacier 'into chancery,' and 'fibbed' her twice round the ropes, so that she became a truly pitiable and delightful spectacle to the connoisseurs in fibbing and bloodshed. But here lay the difference: Motte was a hard hitter; he was a clever man, and (which all clever men are not) a man of sense; but, like Shakspeare, he had no Greek. On the other hand, Dacier had nothing *but* Greek. A certain abbé, at that time, amused all Paris with his caricatures of this Madame Dacier, 'who,' said he, 'ought to be cooking her husband's dinner, and darning his stockings, instead of skirmishing and tilting with Grecian spears; for, be it known that, after all her *not cooking* and her *not darning*, she is as poor a scholar as her injured husband is a good one.' And *there* the abbé was right; witness the husband's *Horace*, in 9 vols., against the wife's *Homer*. However, this was not generally understood. The lady, it was believed, waded petticoat-deep in Greek clover; and in any Grecian field of dispute, naturally she must be in the right, as against one who barely knew his own language and a little Latin. Motte was, therefore, thought by most people to have come off second best. For, as soon as ever he opened thus—'Madame, it seems to me that, agreeably to all common sense or common decorum, the Greek poet should here'———instantly, without

listening to his argument, the intrepid Amazon replied (ὑποδρα ἰδοῦσα), 'You foolish man! you remarkably silly man!—*that* is because you know no better; and the reason you know no better, is because you do not understand *ton d'apameibomenos* as I do.' *Ton d'apameibomenos* fell like a hand-grenade amongst Motte's papers, and blew him up effectually in the opinion of the multitude. No matter what he might say in reply—no matter how reasonable, how unanswerable—that one spell of 'No Greek! no Greek!' availed as a talisman to the lady both for offence and defence; and refuted all syllogisms and all eloquence as effectually as the cry of *À la lanterne!* in the same country some fourscore years after.

So it will always be. Those who (like Madame Dacier) possess no accomplishment *but* Greek, will, of necessity, set a superhuman value upon that literature in all its parts, to which their own narrow skill becomes an available key. Besides that, over and above this coarse and conscious motive for overrating that which reacts with an equal and answerable overrating upon their own little philological attainments, there is another agency at work, and quite unconsciously to the subjects of that agency, in disturbing the sanity of any estimate they may make of a foreign literature. It is the habit (well known to psychologists) of transferring to anything created by our own skill, or which reflects our own skill, as if it lay causatively and objectively* in the reflecting thing itself, that pleasurable power which in very truth belongs subjectively* to the mind of

— *Objectively* and *subjectively* are terms somewhat too metaphysical; but they are so indispensable to accurate thinking

him who surveys it, from conscious success in the exercise of his own energies. Hence it is that we see daily without surprise, young ladies hanging enamoured over the pages of an Italian author, and calling attention to trivial commonplaces, such as, clothed in plain mother English, would have been more repulsive to them than the distinctions of a theologian, or the counsels of a great-grandmother. They mistake for a pleasure yielded by the author, what is in fact the pleasure attending their own success in mastering what was lately an insuperable difficulty.

It is indeed a pitiable spectacle to any man of sense and feeling, who happens to be really familiar with the golden treasures of his own ancestral literature, and a spectacle which moves alternately scorn and sorrow, to see young people squandering their time and painful study upon writers not fit to unloose the shoes' latchets of many amongst their own compatriots; making painful and remote voyages after the drossy refuse, when the pure gold lies neglected at their feet. Too often he is reminded of a case, which is still sometimes to be witnessed in London. Now and then it will happen that a lover of art, modern or antique alike, according to its excellence, will find himself honoured by an invitation from some millionnaire, or some towering grandee, to 'assist,' as the phrase is, at the opening of a case newly landed from the Tiber or the Arno, and fraught (as he is assured) with the very gems of Italian art, inter-

that we are inclined to show them some indulgence; and, the more so, in cases where the mere position and connection of the words are half sufficient to explain their application.

mingled besides with many genuine antiques. He goes: the cases are solemnly disgorged; adulatory hangers on, calling themselves artists, and, at all events, so much so as to appreciate the solemn farce enacted, stand by uttering hollow applauses of my Lord's taste, and endeavouring to play upon the tinkling cymbals of spurious enthusiasm: whilst every man of real discernment perceives at a glance the mere refuse and sweeping of a third-rate *studio*, such as many a native artist would disdain to turn out of his hands; and antiques such as could be produced, with a month's notice, by cart-loads, in many an obscure corner of London. Yet for this rubbish has the great man taken a painful tour; compassed land and sea; paid away in exchange a king's ransom; and claims now on their behalf, the very humblest homage of artists who are taxed with the basest envy if they refuse it, and who, meantime, cannot in sincerity look upon the trumpery with other feelings than such as the potter's wheel, if (like Ezekiel's wheels) it were instinct with spirit, would entertain for the vilest of its own creations—culinary or 'post-culinary' mugs and jugs. We, the writers of this paper, are not artists, are not connected with artists. And yet, upon the general principle of sympathy with native merit, and of disgust towards all affectation, we cannot but recall such anecdotes with scorn; and often we recollect the stories recorded by poor Benvenuto Cellini, that dissolute but brilliant vagabond, who (like our own British artists) was sometimes upbraided with the degeneracy of modern art, and, upon his humbly requesting some evidence, received, by way of practical answer, a sculptured gem

or vase, perhaps with a scornful demand of—when would he be able to produce anything like that—'eh, Master Ben? Fancy we must wait a few centuries or so, before you'll be ready with the fellow of this.' And, lo! on looking into some hidden angle of the beautiful production, poor Cellini discovered his own private mark, the supposed antique having been a pure forgery of his own. Such cases remind one too forcibly of the pretty Horatian tale, where, in a contest between two men who undertake to mimic a pig's grunting, he who happens to be the favourite of the audience is applauded to the echo for his felicitous execution, and repeatedly encored, whilst the other man is hissed off the stage, and well kicked by a band of amateurs and cognoscenti, as a poor miserable copyist and impostor; but, unfortunately for the credit of his exploders, he has just time, before they have quite kicked him off, for exposing to view the real pig concealed under his cloak, which pig it was, and not himself, that had been the artist—forced by pinches into 'mimicry' of his own porcine music. Of all baffled connoisseurs, surely these Roman pig-fanciers must have looked the most confounded. Yet there is no knowing: and we ourselves have a clever friend, but rather too given to subtilising, who contends, upon some argument not perfectly intelligible to us, that Horace was not so conclusive in his logic as he fancied; that the real pig might not have an 'ideal' or normal squeak, but a peculiar and non-representative squeak; and that, after all, the man might deserve the 'threshing' he got. Well, it may be so; but, however, the Roman audience, wrong or not, for once fancied themselves in the wrong; and we cannot

but regret that our own ungenerous disparagers of native merit, and *exclusive* eulogisers of the dead or the alien—of those only '*quos Libitina sacravit*,' or whom oceans divide from us—are not now and then open to the same *palpable* refutation, as they are certainly guilty of the same mean error, in prejudging the whole question, and refusing to listen even to the plain evidence of their own feelings, or, in some cases, to the voice of their own senses.

From this preface it is already abundantly clear what side *we* take in this dispute about modern literature and the antique.* And we now propose to justify our leaning by a general review of the Pagan authors, in their elder section—that is, the Grecians. These will be enough in all conscience, for one essay; and even for them we meditate a very cursory inquest; not such as would suffice in a grand cere-

* In general usage, '*The antique*' is a phrase limited to the expression of art; but improperly so. It is quite as legitimately used to denote the *literature* of ancient times, in contradistinction to the modern. As to the term *classical*, though generally employed as equivalent to Greek and Roman, the reader must not forget this is quite a false limitation, contradicting the very reason for applying the word in *any* sense to literature. For the application arose thus: The social body of Rome being divided into six classes, of which the lowest was the sixth, it followed that the highest was the first. Thence, by a natural process common to most languages, those who belonged to this highest had no number at all assigned to them. The very absence of a number, the calling them *classici*, implied that they belonged to *the* class emphatically, or *par excellence*. *The classics* meant, therefore, the grandees in social consideration; and thence by analogy in literature. But if this analogy be transferred from Rome to Greece, where it had no corresponding root in civic arrangement—then, by parity of reason, to all nations.

monial day of battle—a *justum prælium*, as a Roman would call it—but in a mere perfunctory skirmish, or (if the reader objects to that word as pedantic, though, really, it is a highly-favoured word amongst ancient divines, and with many a

'philosopher,
Who has read Alexander Ross over,')

why, in that case, let us indulge his fastidious taste by calling it an autoschediastic combat, to which, surely, there can be no such objection. And as the manner of the combat is autoschediastic or extemporaneous, and to meet a hurried occasion, so is the reader to understand that the object of our disputation is not the learned, but the unlearned student; and our purpose, not so much to discontent the one with his painful acquisitions, as to console the other under what, upon the old principle of *omne ignotum pro magnifico*, he is too apt to imagine his irreparable disadvantages. We set before us, as our especial auditor, the reasonable man of plain sense but strong feeling, who wishes to know how much he has lost, and what injury the gods did him, when, though making him, perhaps, poetical, they cut short his allowance of Latin, and, as to Greek, gave him not a jot more than a cow has in her side pocket.

Let us begin at the beginning—and that, as everybody knows, is Homer. He is, indeed, so much at the beginning that, for that very reason (if even there were no other), he is, and will be ever more, supremely interesting. Is the unlearned reader aware of his age? Upon that point there are more hypotheses than one or even two. Some there are

among the chronologers who make him eleven hundred years anterior to Christ. But those who allow him least, place him more than nine—that is, about two centuries before the establishment of the Grecian Olympiads, and (which is pretty nearly the same thing as regards time) before Romulus and Remus. Such an antiquity as this, even on its own account, is a reasonable object of interest. A poet to whom the great-grandfather of old Ancus Martius (his grandfather, did we say—that is, avus?—nay, his *abavus*, his *atavus*, his *tritavus*) looked back as to one in a line with his remote ancestor—a poet who, if he travelled about as extensively as some have supposed him to do, or even as his own countryman Herodotus most certainly did five or six hundred years afterwards, might have conversed with the very workmen who laid the foundations of the first temple at Jerusalem—might have bent the knee before Solomon in all his glory:—Such a poet, were he no better than the worst of our own old metrical romancers, would—merely for his antiquity, merely for the sublime fact of having been coeval with the eldest of those whom the eldest of histories presents to our knowledge; coeval with the earliest kings of Judah, older than the greatest of the Judean prophets, older than the separation of the two Jewish crowns and the revolt of Israel, and, even with regard to Moses and to Joshua, not in any larger sense junior than as we ourselves are junior to Chaucer—purely and exclusively with regard to these pretensions, backed and supported by an antique form of an antique language—the most comprehensive and the most melodious in the world, would—could—should—ought to merit

a filial attention; and, perhaps with those who had waggon-loads of time to spare, might plead the benefit, beyond most of those in whose favour it was enacted, of that Horatian rule—

'vos exemplaria Græca,
Nocturnâ versate manu, versate diurna.'

In fact, when we recollect that, in round numbers, we ourselves may be considered as two thousand years in advance of Christ, and that (by assuming less even than a mean between the different dates assigned to Homer) he stands a thousand years before Christ, we find between Homer and ourselves a gulf of three thousand years, or about one clear half of the total extent which we grant to the present duration of our planet. This in itself is so sublime a circumstance in the relations of Homer to our era, and the sense of power is so delightfully titillated to that man's feeling, who, by means of Greek, and a very moderate skill in this fine language, is able to grasp the awful span, the vast arch of which one foot rest upon 1838, and the other almost upon the war of Troy—the mighty rainbow which, like the archangel in the Revelation, plants its western limb amongst the carnage and the magnificence of Waterloo, and the other amidst the vanishing gleams and the dusty clouds of Agamemnon's rearguard—that we may pardon a little exultation to the man who can actually mutter to himself, as he rides home of a summer evening, the very words and vocal music of the old blind man at whose command

'————the Iliad and the Odyssey
Rose to the murmurs of the voiceful sea.'

But pleasures in this world fortunately are without end. And every man, after all, has many pleasures peculiar to himself—pleasures which no man shares with him, even as he is shut out from many of other men. To renounce one in particular, is no subject for sorrow, so long as many remain in that very class equal or superior. Elwood the Quaker had a luxury which none of us will ever have, in hearing the very voice and utterance of a poet quiet as blind as Homer, and by many a thousand times more sublime. And yet Elwood was not perhaps much happier for *that*. For now, to proceed, reader—abstract from his *sublime* antiquity, and his being the very earliest of authors, allowance made for one or two Hebrew writers (who, being inspired, are scarcely to be viewed as human competitors), how much is there in Homer, *intrinsically* in Homer, stripped of his fine draperies of time and circumstance, in the naked Homer, disapparelled of the pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious antiquity, to remunerate a man for his labour in acquiring Greek? Men think very differently about what *will* remunerate any given labour. A fool (professional *fool*) in Shakspeare ascertains, by a natural process of logic, that a 'remuneration' means a *testern*, which is just sixpence; and two remunerations, therefore, a testoon, or one shilling. But many men will consider the same service ill paid by a thousand pounds. So, of the reimbursement for learning a language. Lord Camden is said to have learned Spanish, merely to enjoy Don Quixote more racily. Cato, the elder Cato, after abusing Greek throughout his life, sat down in extreme old age to study it: and wherefore? Mr. Coleridge mentions

an author, in whom, upon opening his pages with other expectations, he stumbled upon the following fragrant passage—'But from this frivolous digression upon philosophy and the fine arts, let us return to a subject too little understood or appreciated in these sceptical days—the subject of *dung*.' Now, *that* was precisely the course of thought with this old censorious Cato: So long as Greek offered, or seemed to offer, nothing but philosophy or poetry, he was clamorous against Greek; but he began to thaw and melt a little upon the charms of Greek—he 'owned the soft impeachment,' when he heard of some Grecian treatises upon *beans* and *turnips;* and, finally, he sank under its voluptuous seductions, when he heard of others upon DUNG. There are, therefore, as different notions about a 'remuneration' in this case, as the poor fool had met with it in *his* case. We, however, unappalled by the bad names of 'Goth,' 'Vandal,' and so forth, shall honestly lay before the reader *our* notions.

When Dryden wrote his famous, indeed matchless, epigram upon the three great masters (or reputed masters) of the Epopee, he found himself at no loss to characterize the last of the triad—no matter what qualities he imputed to the first and the second, he knew himself safe in imputing them all to the third. The mighty modern had everything that his predecessors were ever *thought* to have, as well as something beside.* So he expressed the surpassing

* The beauty of this famous epigram lies in the *form* of the conception. The first had A; the second had B; and when nature, to furnish out a third, should have given him C, she found that A and B had already exhausted her cycle; and that

grandeur of Milton, by saying that in him nature had embodied, by concentration as in one focus, whatever excellencies she had scattered separately amongst her earlier favourites. But, in strict regard to the facts, this is far from being a faithful statement of the relations between Milton and his elder brothers of the *Epos:* in sublimity, if that is what Dryden meant by 'loftiness of thought,' it is not so fair to class Milton with the greatest of poets, as to class him apart, retired from all others, sequestered, 'sole-sitting by the shores of old romance.' In other poets, in Dante for example, there may be rays, gleams, sudden coruscations, casual scintillations, of the sublime; but for any continuous and sustained blaze of the sublime, it is in vain to look for it, *except* in Milton, making allowances (as before) for the inspired sublimities of Isaiah, Ezekiel, and of the great Evangelist's Revelations. As to Homer, no critic who writes from personal and *direct* knowledge on the one hand, or who understands the value of words on the other, ever contended in any critical sense for sublimity, as a quality to which he had the slightest pretensions. What! not Longinus? If he did, it would have been of little consequence; for he had no field of comparison, as we, knowing no literature but one—whereas we have a range of seven or eight. But he did not: Τὸ ὑψηλον,* or the elevated, in the Longinian

she could distinguish her third great favourite only by giving him both A and B in combination. But the filling up of this outline is imperfect: for the A (*loftiness*) and the B (*majesty*) are one and the same quality, under different names.

* Because the Latin word *sublimis* is applied to objects soaring upwards, or floating aloft, or at an aerial altitude, and because the word does *sometimes* correspond to our idea of the

sense, expressed all, no matter of what origin, of what tendency, which gives a character of life and animation to composition—whatever raises it above the dead level of flat prosaic style. Emphasis, or what in an artist's sense gives *relief* to a passage, causing it to stand forward, and in advance of what surrounds it—that is the predominating idea in the 'sublime' of Longinus. And this explains what otherwise has perplexed his modern interpreters—viz. that amongst the elements of his sublime, he ranks even the pathetic, *i. e.* (say they) what by connecting itself with the depressing passion of grief is the very counter-agent to the elevating affection of the sublime. True, most sapient sirs, my very worthy and approved good masters: but that very consideration should have taught you to look back, and reconsider your translation of the capital word ὑψος. It was rather too late in the day, when you had waded half-seas over in your translation, to find

sublime (in which the notion of height is united with the notion of moral grandeur), and because, in the excessive vagueness and lawless latitudinarianism of our common Greek Lexicons, the word ὑψος is translated, *inter alia*, by *τὸ sublime, sublimitas*, &c. Hence it has happened that the title of the little essay ascribed to Longinus, Περὶ ὑψοῦς, is usually rendered into English, *Concerning the sublime.* But the idea of the Sublime, as defined, circumscribed, and circumstantiated, in English literature—an idea altogether of English growth—the *subline byway of polar antithesis to the Beautiful*, had no existence amongst ancient critics; consequently it could have no expression. It is a great thought, a true thought, a demonstrable thought, that the Sublime, as thus ascertained, and in contraposition to the Beautiful, grew up on the basis of *sexual* distinctions, the Sublime corresponding to the male, the Beautiful, its anti-pole, corresponding to the female. Behold! we show you a mystery.

out either that you yourselves were ignoramuses, or that your principal was an ass. 'Returning were as tedious as go o'er.' And any man might guess how you would settle such a dilemma. It is, according to you, a little oversight of your principal: '*humanum aliquid passus est.*' We, on the other hand, affirm that, if an error at all on the part of Longinus, it is too monstrous for any man to have 'overlooked.' As long as he could see a pike-staff, he must have seen that. And, therefore, we revert to *our* view of the case—viz. that it is yourselves who have committed the blunder, in translating by the Latin word *sublimis* * at all, but still more after it had received new determinations under modern usage.

* No word has ever given so much trouble to modern critics as this very word (now under discussion) of the *sublime*. To those who have little Greek and *no* Latin, it is necessary in the first place that we should state what are the most obvious elements of the word. According to the noble army of etymologists, they are these two Latin words—*sub*, under, and *limus*, mud. Oh! gemini! who would have thought of groping for the sublime in such a situation as that?—unless, indeed, it were that writer cited by Mr. Coleridge, and just now referred to by ourselves, who complains of frivolous modern readers, as not being able to raise and sequester their thoughts to the abstract consideration of dung. Hence it has followed, that most people have quarrelled with the etymology. Whereupon the late Dr. Parr, of pedantic memory, wrote a huge letter to Mr. Dugald Stewart, but the marrow of which lies in a nutshell, especially being rather hollow within. The learned doctor, in the first folio, grapples with the word *sub*, which, says he, comes from the Greek—so much is clear—but from what Greek, Bezonian? The thoughtless world, says he, trace it to ὑπὸ (hypo), sub, *i. e.* under; but I, Ego, Samuel Parr, the Birmingham doctor, trace it to ὑπερ (hyper), super, *i. e.* above; between which the difference is not less than between a chestnut horse and a horse-chestnut. To this learned Parrian dissertation on mud, there

Now, therefore, after this explanation, recurring to the Longinian critiques upon Homer, it will avail any idolator of Homer but little, it will affect us not much, to mention that Longinus makes frequent reference to the *Iliad*, as the great source of the sublime—

> 'A quo, ceu fonte perenni,
> Vatum Pieriis ora rigantur aquis';

for, as respected Grecian poets, and as respected *his* sense of the word, it cannot be denied that Homer was such. He was the great well-head of inspiration to the Pagan poets of after times, who, however (*as a body*), moved in the narrowest circle that has ever yet confined the natural freedom of the poetic mind. But, in conceding this, let it not be forgotten how much we concede—we concede as much as Longinus demanded; that is, that Homer furnished an ideal or model of fluent narration, picturesque description, and the first outlines of what could be called characteristic delineations of persons. Accordingly, uninventive Greece—for we maintain loudly that

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cannot be much reasonably to object, except its length in the first place; and, secondly, that we ourselves exceedingly doubt the common interpretation of *limus*. Most unquestionably, if the sublime is to be brought into any relation at all to mud, we shall all be of one mind—that it must be found *above*. But to us it appears—that when the true modern idea of mud was in view, *limus* was not the word used. Cicero, for instance, when he wishes to call Piso 'filth, mud,' &c. calls him *Cœnum:* and, in general, *limus* seems to have involved the notion of something adhesive, and rather to express *plaister*, or artificially prepared cement, &c., than that of filth or impure depositions. Accordingly, our own definition differs from the Parrian, or Birmingham definition; and may, nevertheless, be a Birmingham definition also. Not having room to defend it, for the present we forbear to state it.

Greece, in her poets, *was* uninventive and sterile beyond the example of other nations—received, as a traditional inheritance, the characters of the Paladins of the Troad.* Achilles is always the all-accomplished and supreme amongst these Paladins, the Orlando of ancient romance; Agamemnon, for ever the Charlemagne; Ajax, for ever the sullen, imperturbable, columnar champion, the Mandricardo, the *Bergen-op-Zoom* of his faction, and corresponding to our modern 'Chicken' in the pugilistic ring, who was so called (as the books of the Fancy say) because he was a 'glutton'; and a 'glutton' in this sense—that he would take any amount of cramming (*i. e.* any possible quantum of 'milling,' or 'punishment'). Ulysses, again, is uniformly, no matter whether in the solemnities of the tragic scene, or the festivities of the Ovidian romance, the same shy cock, but also sly cock, with the least thought of a white feather in his plumage; Diomed is the same unmeaning double of every other hero, just as Rinaldo is with respect to his greater cousin, Orlando; and so of Teucer, Meriones, Idomeneus, and the other less-marked characters. The Greek drama took up these traditional characters, and sometimes deepened, saddened, exalted the features—as Sophocles, for instance, does with his 'Ajax Flagellifer'—Ajax the knouter of

* There is a difficulty in assigning any term as comprehensive enough to describe the Grecian heroes and their antagonists, who fought at Troy. The seven chieftains against Thebes are described sufficiently as Theban captains; but, to say *Trojan* chieftains, would express only the heroes of one side; *Grecian*, again, would be liable to that fault equally, and to another far greater, of being under no limitation as to time. This difficulty must explain and (if it can) justify our collective phrase of the Paladins of the Troad.

sheep—where, by the way, the remorse and penitential grief of Ajax for his own self-degradation, and the depth of his affliction for the triumph which he had afforded to his enemies—taken in connection with the tender fears of his wife, Tecmessa, for the fate to which his gloomy despair was too manifestly driving him; her own conscious desolation, and the orphan weakness of her son, in the event which she too fearfully anticipates—the final suicide of Ajax; the brotherly affection of Teucer to the widow and the young son of the hero, together with the unlooked-for sympathy of Ulysses, who, instead of exulting in the ruin of his antagonist, mourns over it with generous tears—compose a situation, and a succession of situations, not equalled in the Greek tragedy; and, in that instance, we see an effort, rare in Grecian poetry, of conquest achieved by idealisation over a mean incident—viz. the hallucination of brain in Ajax, by which he mistakes the sheep for his Grecian enemies, ties them up for flagellation, and scourges them as periodically as if he were a critical reviewer. But really, in one extremity of this madness, where he fixes upon an old ram for Agamemnon, as the leader of the flock, the ἀναξ ἀνδρων Αγαμεμνων, there is an extravagance of the ludicrous against which, though not exhibited scenically, but simply narrated, no solemnity of pathos could avail; even in narration, the violation of tragical dignity is insufferable, and is as much worse than the hyper-tragic horrors of *Titus Andronicus* (a play which is usually printed, without reason, amongst those of Shakspeare) as absolute farce or contradiction of all pathos must inevitably be a worse indecorum than physical horrors

which simply outrage it by excess. Let us not, therefore, hear of the judgment displayed upon the Grecian stage, when even Sophocles, the chief master of dramatic economy and scenical propriety, could thus err by an aberration so far transcending the most memorable violation of stage decorum which has ever been charged upon the English drama.

From Homer, therefore, were left, as a bequest to all future poets, the romantic adventures which grow, as so many collateral dependencies,

'From the tale of Troy divine';

and from Homer was derived also the discrimination of the leading characters, which, after all, were but coarsely and rudely discriminated; at least, for the majority. In one instance only we acknowledge an exception. We have heard a great modern poet dwelling with real and not counterfeit enthusiasm upon the character (or rather upon the general picture, as made up both of character and position), which the course of the *Iliad* assigns gradually to Achilles. The view which he took of this impersonation of human grandeur, combining all gifts of intellect and of body, matchless speed, strength, inevitable eye, courage, and the immortal beauty of a god, being also, by his birth-right, half-divine, and consecrated to the imagination by his fatal interweaving with the destinies of Troy, and to the heart by the early death which to *his own knowledge* *

* 'To his own knowledge'—see, for proof of this, the gloomy serenity of his answer to his dying victim, when predicting his approaching end:—

'Enough; I know my fate: to die—to see no more
My much-lov'd parents, and my native shore,' &c. &c.

impended over his magnificent career, and so abruptly shut up its vista—the view, we say, which our friend took of the presiding character throughout the *Iliad*, who is introduced to us in the very first line, and who is only eclipsed for seventeen books, to emerge upon us with more awful lustre;—the view which he took was—that Achilles, and Achilles only, in the Grecian poetry, was a great idea—an idealised creation; and we remember that in this respect he compared the Homeric Achilles with the Angelica of Ariosto. Her only he regarded as an idealisation in the *Orlando Furioso*. And certainly in the luxury and excess of her all-conquering beauty, which drew after her from 'ultimate Cathay' to the camps of the baptised in France, and back again, from the palace of Charlemagne, drew half the Paladins, and 'half Spain militant,' to the portals of the rising sun; that sovereign beauty which (to say nothing of kings and princes withered by her frowns) ruined for a time the most princely of all the Paladins, the supreme Orlando, crazed him with scorn,

'And robbed him of his noble wits outright'—

in all this, we must acknowledge a glorification of power not unlike that of Achilles:—

'Irresistible Pelides, whom, unarm'd,
No strength of man or wild beast could withstand;
Who tore the lion as the lion tears the kid;
Ran on embattl'd armies clad in iron;
And, weaponless himself,
Made arms ridiculous, useless the forgery
Of brazen shield and spear, the hammer'd cuirass,
Chalybean temper'd steel, and frock of mail,
Adamantean proof;
But safest he who stood aloof,

When insupportably his foot advanced
Spurned them to death by troops. The bold Priamides
Fled from his lion ramp ; old warriors turn'd
Their plated backs under his heel,
Or, groveling, soil'd their crested helmets in the dust.'

These are the words of Milton in describing that 'heroic Nazarete,' 'God's champion'—

'Promis'd by heavenly message twice descending';

heralded, like Pelides,

'By an angel of his birth,
Who from his father's field
Rode up in flames after his message told';

these are the celestial words which describe the celestial prowess of the Hebrew monomachist, the irresistible Sampson; and are hardly less applicable to the 'champion paramount' of Greece confederate.

This, therefore, this unique conception, with what power they might, later Greek poets adopted; and the other Homeric characters they transplanted somewhat monotonously, but at times, we are willing to admit, and have already admitted, improving and solemnizing the original epic portraits when brought upon the stage. But all this extent of obligation amongst later poets of Greece to Homer serves less to argue his opulence than their penury. And if, quitting the one great blazing jewel, the Urim and Thummim of the *Iliad*, you descend to individual passages of poetic effect; and if amongst these a fancy should seize you of asking for a specimen of the *Sublime* in particular, what is it that you are offered by the critics? Nothing that we remember beyond one single passage, in which the god Neptune is

described in a steeple chase, and 'making play' at a terrific pace. And certainly enough is exhibited of the old boy's hoofs, and their spanking qualities, to warrant our backing him against a railroad for a rump and dozen; but, after all, there is nothing to grow frisky about, as Longinus does, who gets up the steam of a blue-stocking enthusiasm, and boils us a regular gallop of ranting, in which, like the conceited snipe * upon the Liverpool railroad, he thinks himself to run a match with Sampson; and, whilst affecting to admire Homer, is manifestly squinting at the reader to see how far he admires his own flourish of admiration; and, in the very agony of his frosty raptures, is quite at leisure to look out for a little private traffic of rapture on his own account. But it won't do; this old critical posture-master (whom, if Aurelian hanged, surely he knew what he was about) may as well put up his rapture pipes, and (as Lear says) 'not squiny' at us; for let us ask Master Longinus, in what earthly respect do these great strides of Neptune exceed Jack with his seven-league boots? Let him answer that, if he can. We hold that Jack has the advantage. Or, again look at the Koran: does any man but a foolish Oriental think that passage sublime where Mahomet describes the divine pen? It is, says he, made of mother-of-pearl; so much for the 'raw material,' as the economists say. But now for the size: it can hardly be called a 'por-

* On the memorable inaugural day of the Liverpool railroad, when Mr. Huskisson met with so sad a fate, a snipe or a plover tried a race with Sampson, one of the engines. The race continued neck and neck for about six miles, after which, the snipe finding itself likely to come off second best, found it convenient to wheel off, at a turn of the road, into the solitudes of Chat Moss.

table' pen at all events, for we are told that it is so tall of its age, that an Arabian thoroughbred horse would require 500 years for galloping down the slit to the nib. Now this Arabic sublime is *in this instance* quite a kin brother to the Homeric.

However, it is likely that we shall here be reminded of our own challenge to the Longinian word ὑψηλον as not at all corresponding, or even alluding to the modern word sublime. But in this instance, the distinction will not much avail that critic—for no matter by what particular *word* he may convey his sense of its quality, clear it is, by his way of illustrating its peculiar merit, that, in his opinion, these huge strides of Neptune's have something supernaturally grand about them. But, waiving this solitary instance in Homer of the sublime, according to his idolatrous critics—of the pseudo sublime according to ourselves—in all other cases where Longinus, or any other Greek writer has cited Homer as the great exemplary model of ὑψος in composition, we are to understand him according to the Grecian sense of that word. He must then be supposed to praise Homer, not so much for any ideal grandeur either of thought, image, or situation, as in a general sense for his animated style of narration, for the variety and spirited effect with which he relieves the direct formal narration in his own person by dialogue between the subjects of his narration, thus ventriloquising and throwing his own voice as often as he can into the surrounding objects—or again for the similes and allusive pictures by which he points emphasis to a situation or interest to a person.

Now then we have it: when you describe Homer,

or when you hear him described as a lively picturesque old boy [by the way, why does everybody speak of Homer as old?], full of life, and animation, and movement, then you say (or you hear say) what is true, and not much more than what is true. Only about that word picturesque we demur a little: as a chirurgeon, he certainly *is* picturesque; for Howship upon gunshot wounds is a joke to him when he lectures upon *traumacy*, if we may presume to coin that word, or upon traumatic philosophy (as Mr. M'Culloch says so grandly, Economic Science). But, apart from this, we cannot allow that simply to say Ζακυνθος νεμοεσσα, woody Zacynthus, is any better argument of picturesqueness than Stony Stratford, or Harrow on the Hill. Be assured, reader, that the Homeric age was not ripe for the picturesque. *Price on the Picturesque*, or, *Gilpin on Forest Scenery*, would both have been sent post-haste to Bedlam in those days; or perhaps Homer himself would have tied a millstone about their necks, and have sunk them as public nuisances by woody Zante. Besides, it puts almost an extinguisher on any little twinkling of the picturesque that might have flared up at times from this or that suggestion, when each individual had his own regular epithet stereotyped to his name like a brass plate upon a door: Hector, the tamer of horses; Achilles, the swift of foot; the ox-eyed, respectable Juno. Some of the 'big uns,' it is true, had a dress and an undress suit of epithets: as for instance, Hector was also κορυθαιολος, Hector with the tossing or the variegated plumes. Achilles again was διος or divine. But still the range was small, and the monotony was dire.

And now, if you come in good earnest to picturesqueness, let us mention a poet in sober truth worth five hundred of Homer, and that is Chaucer. Show us a piece of Homer's handywork that comes within a hundred leagues of that divine prologue to the *Canterbury Tales*, or of 'The Knight's Tale,' of the 'Man of Law's Tale,' or of the 'Tale of the Patient Griseldis,' or, for intense life of narration and festive wit, to the 'Wife of Bath's Tale.' Or, passing out of the *Canterbury Tales* for the picturesque in human manner and gesture, and play of countenance, never equalled as yet by Pagan or Christian, go to the *Troilus and Cresseid*, and, for instance, to the conversation between Troilus and Pandarus, or, again, between Pandarus and Cresseid. Rightly did a critic of the 17th century pronounce Chaucer a miracle of natural genius, as having 'taken into the compass of his *Canterbury Tales*, the various manners and humours of the whole English nation in his age; not a single character has escaped him.' And this critic then proceeds thus—'The matter and manner of these tales, and of their telling, are so suited to their different educations, humours, and calling, that each of them would be improper in any other mouth. Even the grave and serious characters are distinguished by their several sorts of gravity. Even the ribaldry of the low characters is different. But there is such a variety of game springing up before me, that I am distracted in my choice, and know not which to follow. It is sufficient to say, according to the proverb, that here is God's plenty.' And soon after he goes on to assert (though Heaven knows in terms far below the whole truth), the superiority of

Chaucer to Boccaccio. And, in the meantime, who was this eulogist of Chaucer? Why, the man who himself was never equalled upon this earth, unless by Chaucer, in the art of fine narration: it is John Dryden whom we have been quoting.

Between Chaucer and Homer—as to the main art of narration, as to the picturesque life of the manners, and as to the exquisite delineation of character—the interval is as wide as between Shakespeare, in dramatic power, and Nic. Rowe.

And we might wind up this main chapter, of the comparison between Grecian and English literature—viz. the chapter on Homer, by this tight dilemma. You do or you do not use the Longinian word ὑψος in the modern sense of the sublime. If you do not, then of course you translate it in the Grecian sense, as explained above; and in that sense, we engage to produce many scores of passages from Chaucer, not exceeding 50 to 80 lines, which contain more of picturesque simplicity, more tenderness, more fidelity to nature, more felicity of sentiment, more animation of narrative, and more truth of character, than can be matched in all the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey*. On the other hand, if by ὑψος you choose absurdly to mean sublimity in the modern sense, then it will suffice for us that we challenge *you* to the production of one instance which truly and incontestably embodies that quality.* The burthen of proof rests upon

* The description of Apollo in wrath as νυκτι εοικω, like night, is a doubtful case. With respect to the shield of Achilles, it cannot be denied that the general conception has, in common with all abstractions (as *e. g.* the abstractions of dreams, of prophetic visions, such as that in the 6th Æneid, that to Macbeth, that shown by the angel Michael to Adam),

you who affirm, not upon us who deny. Meantime, as a kind of choke-pear, we leave with the Homeric adorer this one brace of portraits, or hints for such a brace, which we commend to his comparison, as Hamlet did the portraits of the two brothers to his besotted mother. We are talking of the sublime: that is our thesis. Now observe: there is a catalogue in the *Iliad*—there is a catalogue in the *Paradise Lost*. And, like a river of Macedon and of Monmouth, the two catalogues agree in that one fact—viz. that they *are* such. But as to the rest, we are willing to abide by the issue of that one comparison, left to the very dullest sensibility, for the decision of the total question at issue. And what is that? Not, Heaven preserve us! as to the comparative claims of Milton and Homer in this point of sublimity—for surely it would be absurd to compare him who has most with him whom we affirm to have none at all—but whether Homer has the very smallest pretensions in that point. The result, as we state it, is this:—The catalogue of the ruined angels in Milton, is, in itself taken separately, a perfect poem, with the beauty, and the felicity, and the glory of a dream. The Homeric catalogue of ships is exactly on a level with the muster-roll of a regiment, the register of a tax-gatherer, the catalogue of an auctioneer. Nay, some catalogues are far more interesting, and more alive with meaning. 'But him followed fifty black ships!'—'But him follow seventy black ships!'

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something fine and, in its own nature, let the execution be what it may, sublime. But this part of the *Iliad*, we firmly believe so be an interpolation of times long posterior to that of Homer.

Faugh! We could make a more readable poem out of an Insolvent's Balance Sheet.

One other little suggestion we could wish to offer. Those who would contend against the vast superiority of Chaucer (and him we mention chiefly because he really has in excess those very qualities of life, motion, and picturesque simplicity, to which the Homeric characteristics chiefly tend), ought to bear in mind one startling fact evidently at war with the *degree* of what is claimed for Homer. It is this: Chaucer is carried naturally by the very course of his tales into the heart of domestic life, and of the scenery most favourable to the movements of human sensibility. Homer, on the other hand, is kept out of that sphere, and is imprisoned in the monotonies of a camp or a battle-field, equally by the necessities of his story, and by the proprieties of Grecian life (which in fact are pretty nearly those of Turkish life at this day). Men and women meet only under rare, hurried, and exclusive circumstances. Hence it is, that throughout the entire *Iliad*, we have but one scene in which the finest affections of the human heart can find an opening for display; of course, everybody knows at once that we are speaking of the scene between Hector, Andromache, and the young Astyanax. No need for question here; it is Hobson's choice in Greek literature, when you are seeking for the poetry of human sensibilities. One such scene there is, and no more; which, of itself, is some reason for suspecting its authenticity. And, by the way, at this point, it is worth while remarking, that a late excellent critic always pronounced the words applied to Andromache δακρυοεν γελασασα (*tearfully smiling*, or, *smiling through*

her tears), a mere Alexandrian interpolation. And why? Now mark the reason. Was it because the circumstance is in itself vicious, or out of nature? Not at all: nothing more probable or more interesting under the general situation of peril combined with the little incident of the infant's alarm at the plumed helmet. But any just taste feels it to be out of the Homeric key; the barbarism of the age, not mitigated (as in Chaucer's far less barbarous age) by the tenderness of Christian sentiment, turned a deaf ear and a repulsive aspect to such beautiful traits of domestic feeling; to Homer himself the whole circumstance would have been one of pure effeminacy. Now, we recommend it to the reader's reflection—and let him weigh well the condition under which that poetry moves that cannot indulge a tender sentiment without being justly suspected of adulterous commerce with some after age. This remark, however, is by the by; having grown out of the δακρυοεν γελασασα, itself a digression. But, returning from that to our previous theme, we desire every candid reader to ask himself what must be the character, what the circumscription, of that poetry which is limited, by its very subject,* to a scene of such intense uniformity as a battle or a camp; and by the prevailing spirit of manners to the exclusive society of men. To make bricks without straw, was the excess even of Egyptian bondage; Homer could not fight up against the necessities of

* But the *Odyssey*, at least, it will be said, is not thus limited: no, not by its subject; because it carries us amongst cities and princes in a state of peace; but it is equally limited by the spirit of manners; we are never admitted amongst women, except by accident (Nausicaa)—by necessity (Penelope)—or by romance (Circe).

his age, and the defects of its manners. And the very apologies which will be urged for him, drawn as they must be from the spirit of manners prevalent in his era, are reciprocally but so many reasons for not seeking in him the kind of poetry which has been ascribed to him by ignorance, or by defective sensibility, or by the mere self-interest of pedantry.

From Homer, the route stretches thus:—The Grecian drama lies about six hundred years nearer to the Christian era, and Pindar lies in the interval. These—*i. e.* the Dramatic and Lyric—are the important chapters of the Greek poetry; for as to Pastoral poetry, having only Theocritus surviving, and a very little of Bion and Moschus, and of these one only being of the least separate importance—we cannot hold that department entitled to any notice in so cursory a review of the literature, else we have much to say on this also. Besides that, Theocritus was not a natural poet, indigenous to Sicily, but an artificial blue-stocking; as was Callimachus in a different class.

The drama we may place loosely in the generation next before that of Alexander the Great. And his era may be best remembered by noting it as 333 years B. C. Add thirty years to this era—that will be the era of the Drama. Add a little more than a century, and that will be the era of Pindar. Him, therefore, we will notice first.

Now, the chief thing to say as to Pindar is—to show cause, good and reasonable, why no man of sense should trouble his head about him. There was in the seventeenth century a notion prevalent about Pindar, the very contradiction to the truth. It was imagined that he 'had a demon'; that he was under

a burthen of prophetic inspiration; that he was possessed, like a Hebrew prophet or a Delphic priestess, with divine fury. Why was this thought?—simply because no mortal read him. Laughable it is to mention, that Pope, when a very young man, and writing his *Temple of Fame* (partly on the model of Chaucer's), when he came to the great columns and their bas-reliefs in that temple, each of which is sacred to one honoured name, having but room in all for six, chose Pindar for one * of the six. And the first bas-relief on Pindar's column is so pretty, that we shall quote it; especially as it suggested Gray's car for Dryden's 'less presumptuous flight!'

> 'Four swans sustain a car of silver bright,
> With heads advanc'd, and pinions stretch'd for flight:
> Here, *like some furious prophet*, Pindar rode,
> And seem'd to *labour with th' inspiring god.*'

Then follow eight lines describing other bas-reliefs, containing 'the figured games of Greece' (Olympic, Nemean, &c.). But what we spoke of as laughable in the whole affair is, that Master Pope neither had then read one line of Pindar, nor ever read one line of Pindar: and reason good; for at that time he could not read the simple Homeric Greek; while the Greek of Pindar exceeds all other Greek in difficulty, excepting, perhaps, a few amongst the tragic choruses, which are difficult for the very same reason—lyric abruptness, lyric involution, and lyric obscurity of transition. Not having read Homer, no wonder that Pope should place, amongst the bas-reliefs illustrating the *Iliad*, an incident which does not exist in the

* The other five were Homer, Virgil, Horace, Aristotle, Cicero.

*Iliad.** Not having read Pindar, no wonder that Pope should ascribe to Pindar qualities which are not only imaginary, but in absolute contradiction to his true ones. A more sober old gentleman does not exist: his demoniac possession is a mere fable. But there are two sufficient arguments for not reading him, so long as innumerable books of greater interest remain unread. First, he writes upon subjects that, to us, are mean and extinct—race-horses that have been defunct for twenty-five centuries, chariots that were crazy in his own day, and contests with which it is impossible for us to sympathise. Then his digressions about old genealogies are no whit better than his main theme, nor more amusing than a Welshman's pedigree. The best translator of any age, Mr. Carey, who translated Dante, has done what human skill could effect to make the old Theban readable; but, after all, the man is yet to come who *has* read Pindar, *will* read Pindar, or *can* read Pindar, except, indeed, a translator in the way of duty. And the son of Philip himself, though he bade 'spare the house of Pindarus,' we vehemently suspect, never read the works of Pindarus; that labour he left to some future Hercules. So much for his subjects: but a second objection is—his metre. The hexameter, or heroic metre of the ancient Greeks, is delightful to our modern ears; so is the Iambic metre fortunately of the stage: but the Lyric metres generally, and those

* Viz. the supposed dragging of Hector three times round Troy by Achilles—a mere post-Homeric fable. But it is ludicrous to add, that, in after years—nay, when nearly at the end of his translation of the *Iliad*, in 1718—Pope took part in a discussion upon Homer's reasons for ascribing such conduct to his hero, seriously arguing the *pro* and *con* upon a pure fiction.

of Pindar without one exception, are as utterly without meaning to us, as merely chaotic labyrinths of sound, as Chinese music or Dutch concertos. Need we say more?

Next comes the drama. But this is too weighty a theme to be discussed slightly; and the more so because here only we willingly concede a strong motive for learning Greek; here, only, we hold the want of a ready introduction to be a serious misfortune. Our general argument, therefore, which had for its drift to depreciate Greek, dispenses, in this case, with our saying anything; since every word we *could* say would be hostile to our own purpose. However, we shall, even upon this field of the Greek literature, deliver one oracular sentence, tending neither to praise nor dispraise it, but simply to state its relations to the mcdern, or, at least, the English drama. In the ancient drama, to represent it justly, the unlearned reader must imagine grand situations, impressive groups; in the modern tumultuous movement, a grand stream of action. In the Greek drama, he must conceive the presiding power to be *Death;* in the English, *Life.* What Death?—What Life? That sort of death or of life locked up and frozen into everlasting slumber, which we see in sculpture; that sort of life, of tumult, of agitation, of tendency to something beyond, which we see in painting. The picturesque, in short, domineers over English tragedy; the sculpturesque, or the statuesque, over the Grecian.

The moralists, such as Theogins, the miscellaneous or didactic poets, such as Hesiod, are all alike below any notice in a sketch like this. The Epigrammatists, or writers of monumental inscriptions, &c., remain;

and they, next after the dramatic poets, present the most interesting field by far in the Greek literature; but these are too various to be treated otherwise than *viritim* and in detail.

There remains the prose literature; and, with the exception of those critical writers who have written on rhetoric (such as Hermogenes, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Demetrius Phalerius, &c. &c., some of whom are the best writers extant, on the mere art of constructing sentences, but could not interest the general reader), the prose writers may be thus distributed: 1st, the orators; 2nd, the historians; 3rd, the philosophers; 4th, the literateurs (such as Plutarch, Lucian, &c.).

As to the philosophers, of course there are only two who can present any general interest—Plato and Aristotle; for Xenophon is no more a philosophic writer than our own Addison. Now, in this department, it is evident that the matter altogether transcends the manner. No man will wish to study a profound philosopher, but for some previous interest in his doctrines; and, if by any means a man has obtained this, he may pursue this study sufficiently through translations. It is true that neither Sydenham nor Taylor has done justice to Plato, for example, as respects the colloquial graces of his style; but, when the object is purely to pursue a certain course of principles and inferences, the student cannot complain much that he has lost the dramatic beauties of the dialogue, or the luxuriance of the style. These he was not then seeking, by the supposition—what he *did* seek, is still left; whereas in poetry, if the golden apparel is lost, if the music has melted away from

the thoughts, all, in fact, is lost. Old Hobbes, or Ogilbie, is no more Homer than the score of Mozart's *Don Giovanni* is Mozart's *Don Giovanni.*

If, however, Grecian philosophy presents no absolute temptations to the attainment of Greek, far less does Grecian history. If you except later historians —such as Diodorus, Plutarch, and those (like Appian, Dionysius, Dion Cassius) who wrote of Roman things and Roman persons in Greek, and Polybius, who comes under the same class, at a much earlier period —and none of whom have any interest of style, excepting only Plutarch: these dismissed, there are but three who can rank as classical Greek historians; *three who can lose by translation.* Of these the eldest, Herodotus, is perhaps of real value. Some call him the father of history; some call him the father of lies. Time and Major Rennel have done him ample justice. Yet here, again, see how little need of Greek for the amplest use of a Greek author. Twenty-two centuries and more have passed since the fine old man read his history at the Grecian games of Olympia. One man only has done him right, and put his enemies under his footstool; *and yet this man had no Greek.* Major Rennel read Herodotus only in the translation of Beloe. He has told us so himself. Here, then, is a little fact, my Grecian boys, that you won't easily get over. The father of history, the eldest of prose writers, has been first explained, illustrated, justified, liberated from scandal and disgrace, first had his geography set to rights, first translated from the region of fabulous romance, and installed in his cathedral chair, as Dean (or eldest) of historians, by a military man, who had no more Greek than

Shakspeare, or than we (perhaps you, reader) of the Kalmuck.

Next comes Thucydides. He is the second in order of time amongst the Grecian historians who survive, and the first of those (a class which Mr. Southey, the laureate, always speaks of as the corruptors of genuine history) who affect to treat it philosophically. If the philosophic historians are not always so faithless as Mr. Southey alleges, they are, however, always guilty of dulness. Commend us to one picturesque, garrulous old fellow, like Froissart, or Philip de Comines, or Bishop Burnet, before all the philosophic prosers that ever prosed. These picturesque men will lie a little now and then, for the sake of effect—but so will the philosophers. Even Bishop Burnet, who, by the way, was hardly so much a picturesque as an anecdotal historian, was famous for his gift of lying; so diligently had he cultivated it. And the Duchess of Portsmouth told a noble lord, when inquiring into the truth of a particular fact stated by the very reverend historian, that he was notorious in Charles the Second's court, and that no man believed a word he said. But now Thucydides, though writing about his own time, and doubtless embellishing by fictions not less than his more amusing brethren, is as dull as if he prided himself on veracity. Nay, he tells us no secret anecdotes of the times—surely there must have been many; and this proves to us, that he was a low fellow without political connections, and that he never had been behind the curtain. Now, what business had such a man to set himself up for a writer of history and a speculator on politics? Besides, his history is imperfect; and,

suppose it were not, what is its subject? Why simply one single war; a war which lasted twenty-seven years; but which, after all, through its whole course was enlivened by only two events worthy to enter into general history—viz. the plague of Athens, and the miserable licking which the Athenian invaders received in Sicily. This dire overthrow dished Athens out and out; for one generation to come, there was an end of Athenian domination; and that arrogant state, under the yoke of their still baser enemies of Sparta, learned experimentally what were the evils of a foreign conquest. There was therefore, in the domination of the Thirty Tyrants, something to 'point a moral' in the Peloponnesian war: it was the judicial reaction of martial tyranny and foreign oppression, such as we of this generation have beheld in the double conquest of Paris by insulted and outraged Christendom. But nothing of all this will be found in Thucydides—he is as cool as a cucumber upon every act of atrocity; whether it be the bloody abuse of power, or the bloody retribution from the worm that, being trampled on too long, turns at last to sting and to exterminate—all alike he enters in his daybook and his ledger, posts them up to the account of brutal Spartan or polished Athenian, with no more expression of his feelings (if he had any) than a merchant making out an invoice of puncheons that are to steal away men's wits, or of frankincense and myrrh that are to ascend in devotion to the saints. Herodotus is a fine, old, genial boy, that, like Froissart or some of the crusading historians, kept himself in health and jovial spirits by travelling about; nor did he confine himself to Greece or the Grecian islands;

but he went to Egypt, got bousy in the Pyramid of Cheops, ate a beef-steak in the hanging-gardens of Babylon, and listened to no sailors' yarns at the Piræus, which doubtless, before his time, had been the sole authority for Grecian legends concerning foreign lands. But, as to Thucydides, our own belief is, that he lived like a monk shut up in his *museum* or study; and that, at the very utmost, he may have gone in the steamboat * to Corfu (*i. e.* Corcyra), because *that* was the island which occasioned the row of the Peloponnesian war.

Xenophon now is quite another sort of man; he could use his pen; but also he could use his sword; and (when need was) his heels, in running away. His Grecian history of course is a mere fraction of the general history; and, moreover, our own belief, founded upon the differences of the style, is, that the work now received for his must be spurious. But in this place the question is not worth discussing. Two works remain, professedly historical, which, beyond a doubt, *are* his; and one of them the most interesting prose work by much which Athens has bequeathed us; though, by the way, Xenophon was living in a sort of elegant exile at a chateau in Thessaly, and not under Athenian protection, when he wrote it. Both of his great works relate to a Persian Cyrus, but to a Cyrus of different centuries. The *Cyropædia* is a romance, pretty much on the plan of Fenelon's *Telemaque*, only (Heaven be praised!) not so furi-

* 'In the steamboat!' Yes, reader, the steamboat. It is clear that there *was* one in Homer's time. See the art. *Phœacian* in the *Odyssey:* if it paid then, *à fortiori* six hundred years after. The only point unknown about it, is the captain's name and the state-cabin fares.

ously apoplectic. It pursues the great Cyrus, the founder of the Persian empire, the Cyrus of the Jewish prophets, from his infancy to his death-bed; and describes evidently not any real prince, according to any authentic record of his life, but, upon some basis of hints and vague traditions, improves the actual Cyrus into an ideal fiction of a sovereign and a military conqueror, as he *ought* to be. One thing only we shall say of this work, though no admirers ourselves of the twaddle which Xenophon elsewhere gives us as philosophic memorabilia, that the episode of Abradates and Panthea (especially the behaviour of Panthea after the death of her beloved hero, and the incident of the dead man's hand coming away on Cyrus grasping it) exceeds for pathos everything in Grecian literature, always excepting the Greek drama, and comes nearest of anything, throughout Pagan literature, to the impassioned simplicity of Scripture, in its tale of Joseph and his brethren. The other historical work of Xenophon is the *Anabasis*. The meaning of the title is *the going-up* or *ascent*—viz. of Cyrus the younger. This prince was the younger brother of the reigning king Artaxerxes, nearly two centuries from Cyrus the Great; and, from opportunity rather than a better title, and because his mother and his vast provincial government furnished him with royal treasures able to hire an army, most of all, because he was richly endowed by nature with personal gifts—took it into his head that he would dethrone his brother; and the more so, because he was only his half-brother. His chance was a good one: he had a Grecian army, and one from the very *élite* of Greece; whilst the Persian king had but a

small corps of Grecian auxiliaries, long enfeebled by Persian effeminacy and Persian intermarriages. Xenophon was personally present in this expedition. And the catastrophe was most singular, such as does not occur once in a thousand years. The cavalry of the great King retreated before the Greeks continually, no doubt from policy and secret orders; so that, when a pitched battle became inevitable, the foreign invaders found themselves in the very heart of the land, and close upon the Euphrates. The battle was fought: the foreigners were victorious: they were actually singing *Te Deum* or *Io Pæan* for their victory, when it was discovered that their leader, the native prince in whose behalf they had conquered, was missing; and soon after, that he was dead. What was to be done? The man who should have improved their victory, and placed them at his own right hand when on the throne of Persia, was no more; key they had none to unlock the great fortresses of the empire, none to unloose the enthusiasm of the native population. Yet such was the desperation of their circumstances, that a *coup-de-main* on the capital seemed their best chance. The whole army was and felt itself a forlorn hope. To go forward was desperate, but to go back much more so; for they had a thousand rivers without bridges in their rear; and, if they set their faces in that direction, they would have 300,000 light cavalry upon their flanks, besides nations innumerable—

'Dusk faces with white silken turbans wreath'd';

fierce fellows who understood no Greek, and, what was worse, no joking, but well understood the use of

the scymitar. Bad as things were, they soon became worse; for the chiefs of the Grecian army, being foolish enough to accept a dinner invitation from the Persian commander-in-chief, were assassinated; and the words of Milton became intelligible—that in the lowest deep a lower deep had opened to destroy them. In this dilemma, Xenophon, the historian of the expedition, was raised to a principal command; and by admirable skill he led back the army by a different route to the Black Sea, on the coast of which he knew that there were Grecian colonies: and from one of these he obtained shipping, in which he coasted along (when he did not march by land) to the mouth of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles. This was the famous retreat of the ten thousand; and it shows how much defect of literary skill there was in those days amongst Grecian authors, that the title of the book, *The Going Up*, does not apply to the latter and more interesting seven-eighths of the account. The Going Up is but the preparation or preface to the Going Down, the *Anabasis* to the *Katabasis*, in which latter part it is that Xenophon plays any conspicuous part. A great political interest, however, over and above the personal interest, attaches to this expedition: for there can be no doubt, that to this proof of weakness in the Persian empire, and perhaps to this, *as recorded by Xenophon*, was due the expedition of Alexander in the next generation, which changed the face of the world.

The literateurs, as we have styled Plutarch and Lucian, though far removed from the true classical era, being both posterior to Christianity, are truly interesting. And, for Lucian in particular, though

he is known by reputation only as a humorous and sneering writer, we can say, upon our personal knowledge, that there are passages of more terrific effect, more German, and approaching to the sublime, than anywhere else in Greek literature, out of the tragic poets. Of Plutarch we need hardly speak; one part of his voluminous works—viz. his biographies of Greek and Roman leaders in arts * and arms—being so familiar to all nations; and having been selected by Rousseau as the book for him who should be limited (or, like Collins the poet, should limit himself) to one book only—a foolish choice undoubtedly, but still arguing great range of resources in Plutarch, that he should be thought of after so many myriads of modern books had widened the range of selection. Meantime, the reader is not to forget that, whatever may be his powers of amusement, a more inaccurate or faithless author as to dates, and, indeed, in all matters of research, does not exist than Plutarch. We make it a rule, whenever we see *Plut.* at the bottom of a dictionary article, as the authority on which it rests, to put the better half down as a bouncer. And, in fact, Joe Miller is quite as good authority for English history as Plutarch for Roman.

Now remain the orators; and of these we have a right to speak, for we have read them; and, believe us, reader, not above one or two men in a generation have. If the Editor would allow us room, we would

* 'In arts,' we say, because great orators are amongst his heroes; but, after all, it is very questionable whether, simply as orators, Plutarch would have noticed them. They were also statesmen; and Mitford always treats Demosthenes as first lord of the treasury and premier. Plutarch records no poet, no artist, however brilliant.

gladly contrast them with modern orators; and we could easily show how prodigious are the advantages of modern orators in every point which can enter into a comparison. But to what purpose? Even modern orators, with all the benefit of modern interest, and of allusions everywhere intelligible, are not read in any generation after their own, pulpit orators only being excepted. So that, if the gods *had* made our reader a Grecian, surely he would never so far misspend his precious time, and squander his precious intellect upon old dusty quarrels, never of more value to a philosopher than a tempest in a wash-hand bason, but now stuffed with obscurities which no man can explain, and with lies to which no man can bring the counter-statement. But this would furnish matter for a separate paper.

No. II.—THE GREEK ORATORS.

Now, let us come to the orators. Isocrates, the eldest of those who have survived, is a mere scholastic rhetorician: for he was a timid man, and did not dare to confront the terrors of a stormy political audience; and hence, though he lived about an entire century, he never once addressed the Athenian citizens. It is true, that, although no *bonâ fide* orator —for he never *spoke* in any usual acceptation of that word, and, as a consequence, never had an opportunity of replying, which only can bring forward a man's talents as a *debater*—still he employed his pen upon real and upon existing questions of public policy; and did not, as so many generations of chamber

rhetoricians continued to do in Greece, confine his powers to imaginary cases of political difficulty, or (what were tantamount to imaginary) cases fetched up from the long-past era of King Priam, or the still earlier era of the Seven Chiefs warring against the Seven-gated Thebes of Bœotia, or the half-fabulous era of the Argonauts. Isocrates was a man of sense—a patriot in a temperate way—and with something of a feeling for Greece generally, not merely a champion of Athens. His heart was given to politics: and, in an age when heavy clouds were gathering over the independence and the civil grandeur of his country, he had a disinterested anxiety for drawing off the lightning of the approaching storms by pacific counsels. Compared, therefore, with the common mercenary orators of the Athenian forum—who made a regular trade of promoting mischief, by inflaming the pride, jealousy, vengeance, or the martial instincts of a 'fierce democracy,' and, generally speaking, with no views, high or low, sound or unsound, that looked beyond the momentary profit to themselves from thus pandering to the thoughtless nationality of a most sensitive people—Isocrates is entitled to our respect. His writings have also a separate value, as memorials of political transactions from which the historian has gathered many useful hints; and, perhaps, to a diligent search, they might yield more. But, considered as an orator—if that title can be, with any propriety, allowed to one who declaimed only in his closet—one who, in relation to public affairs, was what, in England, when speaking of practical jurisprudence, we call a Chamber Counsel—Isocrates is languid, and with little of anything characteristic in his manner to

justify a separate consideration. It is remarkable that he, beyond all other rhetoricians of that era, cultivated the *rhythmus* of his periods. And to this object he sacrificed not only an enormity of time, but, I have no doubt, in many cases, the freedom and natural movement of the thoughts. My reason, however, for noticing this peculiarity in Isocrates, is by way of fixing the attention upon the superiority, even artificial ornaments, of downright practical business and the realities of political strife, over the torpid atmosphere of a study or a school. Cicero, long after, had the same passion for *numerositas*, and the full, pompous rotundity of cadence. But in Cicero, all habits and all faculties were nursed by the daily practice of life and its impassioned realities, in the forum or in the senate. What is the consequence? Why this—that, whereas in the most laboured performance of Isocrates (which cost him, I think, one whole *decennium*, or period of ten years), few modern ears are sensible of any striking art, or any great result of harmony; in Cicero, on the other hand, the fine, sonorous modulations of his periodic style, are delightful to the dullest ear of any European. Such are the advantages from real campaigns, from the unsimulated strife of actual stormy life, over the torpid dreams of what the Romans called an *umbratic** experience.

* 'Umbratic.' I have perhaps elsewhere drawn the attention of readers to the peculiar effects of climate, in shaping the modes of our thinking and imaging. A life of *inertia*, which retreats from the dust and toil of actual experience, we (who represent the idea of effeminacy more naturally by the image of shrinking from cold) call a chimney-corner of a fireside experience; but the Romans, to whom the same effeminacy more easily fell under

Isocrates I have noticed as the oldest of the surviving Greek orators: *Demosthenes*, of course, claims a notice more emphatically, as, by universal consent of Athens, and afterwards of Rhodes, of Rome, and other impartial judges, the greatest, or, at least, the most comprehensively great. For, by the way, it must not be forgotten—though modern critics *do* forget this rather important fact in weighing the reputation of Demosthenes—he was not esteemed, in his own day, as the greatest in that particular quality of energy and demoniac power (δεινότης) which is generally assumed to have been his leading characteristic and his *forte;* not only by comparison with his own compatriots, but even with Cicero and the greatest men of the Roman bar. It was not of Demosthenes that the Athenians were accustomed to say, 'he thunders and lightens,' but of Pericles, an elder orator; and even amongst the written oratory of Greece, which still survives (for as to the speeches ascribed to Pericles by Thucydides, I take it for granted that, as usual, these were mere forgeries of the historian), there is a portion which perhaps exceeds Demosthenes in the naked quality of vehemence. But this, I admit, will not impeach his supremacy; for it is probable, that wherever an orator is characterised exclusively by turbulent power, or at least remembered chiefly for that quality, all the other numerous graces of eloquence were wanting to that man, or existed only in a degree which made no equipoise to his insulated gift of Jovian terror. The

the idea of shrinking from the heat of the sun, called it an experience won in the shade; and a mere scholastic student, they called an *umbraticus doctor*.

Gracchi, amongst the Roman orators, were probably more properly 'sons of thunder' than Crassus or Cicero, or even than Cæsar himself, whose oratory, by the way, was, in this respect, like his own character and infinite accomplishments; so that even by Cicero it is rarely cited without the epithet of splendid, magnificent, &c. We must suppose, therefore, that neither Cicero nor Demosthenes was held to be at the head of their respective fields in Rome and Athens, in right of any absolute pre-eminence in the one leading power of an orator—viz. native and fervent vigour—but in right of a large comprehensive harmony of gifts, leaving possibly to some other orators, elder or rival to themselves, a superiority in each of an orator's talents taken apart, but claiming the supremacy, nevertheless, upon the whole, by the systematic union of many qualities tending to one result: pleasing the taste by the harmonious *coup d'œil* from the total assemblage, and also adapting itself to a far larger variety of situations; for, after all, the *mere* son of thunder is disarmed, and apt to become ridiculous, if you strip him of a passionate cause, of a theme saturated with human strife, and of an excitable or tempestuous audience.

Such an audience, however, it will be said that Demosthenes had, and sometimes (but not very often in those orations which survive) such a theme. As to his audience, certainly it was all that could be wished in point of violence and combustible passion; but also it was something more. A mighty advantage it is, doubtless, to an orator, when he sees and hears his own kindling passions instantaneously reflected in the blazing eyes and fiery shouts (the *fremitus*) of his

audience—when he sees a whole people, personally or by deputation, swayed backwards and forwards, like a field of corn in a breeze, by the movements of his own appeals. But, unfortunately, in the Athenian audience, the ignorance, the headstrong violence of prejudice, the arrogance, and, above all, the levity of the national mind—presented, to an orator the most favourite, a scene like that of an ocean always rocking with storms; like a wasp always angry; like a lunatic, always coming out of a passion or preparing to go into one. Well might Demosthenes prepare himself by sea-shore practice; in which I conceive that his purpose must have been, not so much (according to the common notion) to overcrow the noise of the forum, as to *stand fire* (if I may so express it) against the uproarious demonstrations of mob fury.

This quality of an Athenian audience must very seriously have interfered with the intellectual display of an orator. Not a word could he venture to say in the way of censure towards the public will—not even hypothetically to insinuate a fault; not a syllable could he utter even in the way of dissent from the favourite speculations of the moment. If he did, instantly a roar of menaces recalled him to a sense even of personal danger. And, again, the mere vivacity of his audience, requiring perpetual amusement and variety, compelled a man, as great even as Demosthenes, to curtail his arguments, and rarely, indeed, to pursue a theme with the requisite fulness of development or illustration; a point in which the superior dignity and the far less fluctuating mobility of the Roman mind gave an immense advantage to Cicero.

Demosthenes, in spite of all the weaknesses which have been arrayed against his memory by the hatred of his contemporaries, or by the anti-republican feelings of such men as Mitford, was a great man and an honest man. He rose above his countrymen. He despised, in some measure, his audience; and, at length, in the palmy days of his influence, he would insist on being heard; he would insist on telling the truth, however unacceptable; he would not, like the great rout of venal haranguers, lay any flattering unction to the capital distempers of the public mind; he would point out their errors, and warn them of their perils. But this upright character of the man, victorious over his constitutional timidity, does but the more brightly illustrate the local law and the tyranny of the public feeling. How often do we find him, when on the brink of uttering 'odious truth,' obliged to pause, and to propitiate his audience with deprecatory phrases, entreating them to give him time for utterance, not to yell him down before they had heard his sentence to the end. Μη θορυβειτε—'Gentlemen of Athens! for the love of God, do not make an uproar at what I am going to say! Gentlemen of Athens! humbly I beseech you to let me finish my sentence!' Such are his continual appeals to the better feelings of his audience. Now, it is very evident that, in such circumstances, no man could do justice to any subject. At least, when speaking not before a tribunal of justice, but before the people in council assembled—that is, in effect, on his greatest stage of all—Demosthenes (however bold at times, and restive in a matter which he held to be paramount) was required to bend, and did bend, to the local

genius of democracy, reinforced by a most mercurial temperament. The very air of Attica, combined with great political power, kept its natives in a state of habitual intoxication; and even wise men would have had some difficulty in mastering, as it affected themselves, the permanent bias towards caprice and insolence.

Is this state of things at all taken into account in our modern critiques upon Demosthenes? The upshot of what I can find in most modern lecturers upon rhetoric and style, French or English, when speaking of Demosthenes, is this notable simile, by way of representing the final effect of his eloquence—'that, like a mountain torrent, swollen by melting snow, or by rain, it carries all things before it.' Prodigiously original! and exceedingly discriminative! As if such an illustration would not equally represent the effect of a lyrical poem, of Mozart's music, of a stormy chorus, or any other form whatever of impassioned vehemence. Meantime, I suspect grievously that not one of these critics has ever read a paragraph of Demosthenes. Nothing do you ever find quoted but a few notorious passages about Philip of Macedon, and the too-famous oath, by the manes of those that died at Marathon. I call it too famous, because (like Addison's comparison of Marlborough, at Blenheim, to the angel in the storm—of which a schoolmaster then living said, that nine out of every ten boys would have hit upon it in a school exercise) it has no peculiar boldness, and must have occurred to every Athenian, of any sensibility, every day of his life. Hear, on the other hand, a modern oath, and (what is most remarkable) an oath sworn in the pulpit. A

dissenting clergyman (I believe, a Baptist), preaching at Cambridge, and having occasion to affirm or to deny something or other, upon his general confidence in the grandeur of man's nature, the magnificence of his conceptions, the immensity of his aspirations, &c., delivered himself thus:—'By the greatness of human ideals—by the greatness of human aspirations—by the immortality of human creations—*by the Iliad—by the Odyssey*'——Now, that *was* bold, startling, sublime. But, in the other case, neither was the oath invested with any great pomp of imagery or expression; nor, if it had—which is more to the purpose—was such an oath at all representative of the peculiar manner belonging to Demosthenes. It is always a rude and inartificial style of criticism to cite from an author that which, whether fine or not in itself, is no fair specimen of his ordinary style.

What then *is* the characteristic style of Demosthenes?—It is one which grew naturally, as did his defects (by which I mean faults of *omission*, in contradiction to such as are positive), from the composition of his audience. His audience, comprehending so much ignorance, and, above all, so much high-spirited impatience, being, in fact, always on the fret, kept the orator always on the fret. Hence arose short sentences; hence, the impossibility of the long, voluminous sweeps of beautiful rhythmus which we find in Cicero; hence, the animated form of apostrophe and crowded interrogations addressed to the audience. This gives, undoubtedly, a spirited and animated character to the style of Demosthenes; but it robs him of a large variety of structure applied to the logic, or the embellishment, or the music of his

genius of democracy, reinforced by ... but not (like temperament. The very air of At... grandeur. On great political power, kept its ... sing attention, or habitual intoxication; and ever ... orator to rely too had some difficulty in mas... question to the themselves, the permanent ... s, so also the same insolence. ...orbade him to linger

Is this state of things ... ise, to speculate, or, our modern critiques u... business path of the shot of what I can find ... eration—no matter for rhetoric and style, Fre... nity, instruction, or even of Demosthenes, is ... things, the *immediate*—the representing the fin... *entissimum*, was kept steadily like a mountain to... Athenian orator, by the mere by rain, it carries ... original! and ex... way, arises one most important an illustration ... between Grecian oratory (politi- of a lyrical ...) on the one hand, and Roman (to chorus, or a... oint, we may add British) on the vehemence. ...an lawyer, senator, or demagogue, one of th... restrictions—a British member of Demosth... a candidate from the hustings— a few ... y, and by the evidence of many a and th... , an advocate addressing a jury— died ... is oration with a wide circuit of Add... antiquarian, nay, even speculative to ... ery Latin scholar will remember the th... most facetious, the good-natured and ... keenly satiric, picture which the great ... ster draws of the Stoic philosophy, by ... old Cato, who professed that philosophy ... le indulgence for venial human errors. ...that is, in effect, the jury—were tickled

to the soul by seeing the grave Marcus Cato badgered with this fine razor-like raillery; and there can be no doubt that, by flattering the self-respect of the jury, presuming them susceptible of so much wit from a kind of knowledge, and by really delighting such a display of adroit teasing applied to of scenical gravity, this whole scene, though extrajudicial and travelling out of the record, highly useful in conciliating the good-will of Cicero's audience. The same style of liberal *excursus* from the more thorny path of the absolute business before the court, has been often and memorably practised by great English barristers—as, in the trial of Sacheverel, by many of the managers for the Commons; by 'the fluent Murray,' on various occasions; in the great cause of impeachment against our English Verres (or, at least, our Verres as to the situation, though not the guilt), Mr. Hastings; in many of Mr. Erskine's addresses to juries, where political rights were at stake; in Sir James Mackintosh's defence of Peltier for a libel upon Napoleon, when he went into a history of the press as applied to politics—(a liberal inquiry, but which, except in the remotest manner, could not possibly bear upon the mere question of fact before the jury); and in many other splendid instances, which have really made *our* trials and the annals of *our* criminal jurisprudence one great fund of information and authority to the historian. In the senate, I need not say how much farther, and more frequently, this habit of large generalisation, and of liberal excursion from perhaps a lifeless theme, has been carried by great masters; in particular, by Edmund Burke, who carried it, in

fact, to such excess, and to a point which threatened so much to disturb the movement of public business, that, from that cause more perhaps than from rude insensibility to the value of his speculations, he put his audience sometimes in motion for dinner, and acquired (as is well-known) the surname of the Dinner Bell.*

Now, in the Athenian audience, all this was impossible: neither in political nor in forensic harangues was there any license by rule, or any indulgence by usage, or any special privilege by personal favour, to the least effort at improving an individual case of law or politics into general views of jurisprudence, of statesmanship, of diplomacy; no collateral discussions were tolerated—no illustrative details—no historical parallelisms—still less any philosophical moralisations. The slightest show of any tendency in these directions was summarily nipped in the bud: the Athenian gentlemen began to θορυβεῖν in good earnest if a man showed symptoms of entering upon any discussion whatever that was not intensely needful and pertinent in the first place—or which, in the second place, was not of a nature to be wound up in two sentences when a summons should arise either to dinner, or to the theatre, or to the succession of some variety anticipated from another orator.

Hence, therefore, finally arises one great peculiarity of Greek eloquence; and a most unfortunate one for

* Yet this story has been exaggerated; and, I believe, in strict truth, the whole case arose out of some fretful expressions of ill-temper on the part of Burke, and that the name was a retort from a man of wit, who had been personally stung by a sarcasm of the offended orator.

its chance of ever influencing a remote posterity, or, in any substantial sense, of its ever surviving in the real unaffected admiration of us moderns—that it embodies no alien, no collateral information as to manners, usages, modes of feeling—no extrinsic ornament, no side glimpses into Grecian life, no casual historical details. The cause, and nothing but the cause—the political question, and nothing but the question—pealed for ever in the ears of the terrified orator, always on sufferance, always on his good behaviour, always afraid, for the sake of his party or of his client, lest his auditors should become angry, or become impatient, or become weary. And from that intense fear, trammeling the freedom of his steps at every turn, and overruling every motion to the right or to the left, in pure servile anxiety for the mood and disposition of his tyrannical master, arose the very opposite result for us of this day—that we, by the very means adopted to prevent weariness in the immediate auditors, find nothing surviving in Grecian orations but what *does* weary us insupportably through its want of all general interest; and, even amongst private or instant details of politics or law, presenting us with none that throw light upon the spirit of manners, or the Grecian peculiarities of feeling. Probably an Athenian mob would not have cared much at the prospect of such a result to posterity; and, at any rate, would not have sacrificed one atom of their ease or pleasure to obviate such a result: but, to an Athenian orator, this result would have been a sad one to contemplate. The final consequence is, that whilst all men find, or may find, infinite amusement, and instruction of the most liberal kind,

in that most accomplished of statesmen and orators, the Roman Cicero—nay, would doubtless, from the causes assigned, have found, in their proportion, the same attractions in the speeches of the elder Antony, of Hortensius, of Crassus, and other contemporaries or immediate predecessors of Cicero—no person ever reads Demosthenes, still less any other Athenian orator, with the slightest interest beyond that which inevitably attaches to the words of one who wrote his own divine language with probably very superior skill.

But, from all this, results a further inference—viz. the dire affectation of those who pretend an enthusiasm in the oratory of Desmosthenes; and also a plenary consolation to all who are obliged, from ignorance of Greek, to dispense with that novelty. If it be a luxury at all, it is and can be one for those only who cultivate verbal researches and the pleasures of philology.

Even in the oratory of our own times, which oftentimes discusses questions to the whole growth and motion of which we have been ourselves parties present, or even accessary—questions which we have followed in their first emersion and separation from the clouds of general politics; their advance, slow or rapid, towards a domineering interest in the public passions; their meridian altitude; and perhaps their precipitous descent downwards, whether from the consummation of their objects (as in the questions of the Slave Trade, of Catholic Emancipation, of East India Monopoly), or from a partial victory and compromise with the abuse (as in the purification of that Augean stable, prisons, and, still more, private houses

for the insane), or from the accomplishment of one stage or so in a progress which, by its nature, is infinite (as in the various steps taken towards the improvement, and towards the extension of education): even in cases like these, when the primary and ostensible object of the speaker already, on its own account, possesses a commanding attraction, yet will it often happen that the secondary questions, growing out of the leading one, the great elementary themes suggested to the speaker by the concrete case before him—as, for instance, the general question of Test Laws, or the still higher and transcendent question of Religious Toleration, and the relations between the State and religious opinions, or the general history of Slavery and the commerce in the human species, the general principles of economy as applied to monopolies, the past usages of mankind in their treatment of prisoners or of lunatics—these comprehensive and transcendent themes are continually allowed to absorb and throw into the shade, for a time, the minor but more urgent question of the moment through which they have gained their interest. The capital and primary interest gives way for a time to the derivative interest; and it does so by a silent understanding between the orator and his audience. The orator is well assured that he will not be taxed with wandering; the audience are satisfied that, eventually, they will not have lost their time: and the final result is, to elevate and liberalise the province of oratory, by exalting mere business (growing originally, perhaps, out of contingencies of finance, or trade, or local police) into a field for the higher understanding; and giving to the mere necessities of

our position as a nation the dignity of great problems for civilising wisdom or philosophic philanthropy. Look back to the superb orations of Edmund Burke on questions limited enough in themselves, sometimes merely personal; for instance, that on American Taxation, on the Reforms in our Household or Official Expenditure, or at that from the Bristol hustings (by its *primâ facie* subject, therefore, a mere electioneering harangue to a mob). With what marvellous skill does he enrich what is meagre, elevate what is humble, intellectualise what is purely technical, delocalise what is local, generalise what is personal! And with what result? Doubtless to the absolute contemporaries of those speeches, steeped to the very lips in the passions besetting their topics, even to those whose attention was sufficiently secured by the domineering interest, friendly or hostile, to the views of the speaker—even to these I say, that, in so far as they were at all capable of an intellectual pleasure, those parts would be most attractive which were least occupied with the present business and the momentary details. This order of precedency in the interests of the speech held even for them; but to us, removing at every annual step we take in the century, to a greater distance from the mere business and partisan interests of the several cases, this secondary attraction is not merely the greater of the two—to us it has become pretty nearly the sole one, pretty nearly the exclusive attraction.

As to religious oratory, *that* stands upon a different footing—the questions afloat in that province of human speculation being eternal, or at least essentially the same under new forms, receives a strong

illustration from the annals of the English senate, to which also it gives a strong and useful illustration. Up to the era of James I., the eloquence of either House could not, for political reasons, be very striking, on the very principle which we have been enforcing. Parliament met only for dispatch of business; and that business was purely fiscal, or (as at times it happened) judicial. The constitutional functions of Parliament were narrow; and they were narrowed still more severely by the jealousy of the executive government. With the expansion, or rather first growth and development of a gentry, or third estate, expanded, *pari passu*, the political field of their jurisdiction and their deliberative functions. This widening field, as a birth out of new existences, unknown to former laws or usages, was, of course, not contemplated by those laws or usages. Constitutional law could not provide for the exercise of rights by a body of citizens, when, as yet, that body had itself no existence. A gentry, as the depository of a vast overbalance of property, real as well as personal, had not matured itself till the latter years of James I. Consequently the new functions, which the instinct of their new situation prompted them to assume, were looked upon by the Crown, most sincerely, as unlawful usurpations. This led, as we know, to a most fervent and impassioned struggle, the most so of any struggle which has ever armed the hands of men with the sword. For the passions take a far profounder sweep when they are supported by deep thought and high principles.

This element of fervid strife was already, for itself, an atmosphere most favourable to political eloquence.

Accordingly, the speeches of that day, though generally too short to attain that large compass and sweep of movement without which it is difficult to kindle or to sustain any conscious enthusiasm in an audience, were of a high quality as to thought and energy of expression, as high as their circumstantial disadvantages allowed. Lord Strafford's great effort is deservedly admired to this day, and the latter part of it has been often pronounced a *chef-d'œuvre*. A few years before that era, all the orators of note were, and must have been, judicial orators; and, amongst these, Lord Bacon, to whom every reader's thoughts will point as the most memorable, attained the chief object of all oratory, if what Ben Jonson reports of him be true, that he had his audience passive to the motions of his will. But Jonson was, perhaps, too scholastic a judge to be a fair representative judge; and, whatever he might choose to say or to think, Lord Bacon was certainly too weighty—too massy with the bullion of original thought—ever to have realized the idea of a great popular orator—one who

'Wielded at will a fierce democracy,'

and ploughed up the great deeps of sentiment, or party strife, or national animosities, like a Levanter or a monsoon. In the schools of Plato, in the *palæstra Stoicorum*, such an orator might be potent; not *in fœce Romuli*. If he had laboured with no other defect, had he the gift of tautology? Could he say the same thing three times over in direct sequence? For, without this talent of iteration—of repeating the same thought in diversified forms—a man may utter good heads of an oration, but not an oration. Just as the

same illustrious man's essays are good hints—useful topics—for essays; but no approximation to what we, in modern days, understand by *essays:* they are, as an eminent author once happily expressed it to myself, '*seeds, not plants or shrubs; acorns, that is, oaks in embryo, but not oaks.*'

Reverting, however, to the oratory of the Senate, from the era of its proper birth, which we may date from the opening of that our memorable Long Parliament, brought together in November of 1642,* our Parliamentary eloquence has now, within four years, travelled through a period of two centuries. A most admirable subject for an essay, or a Magazine article, as it strikes me, would be a bird's-eye view—or rather a bird's-wing flight—pursuing rapidly the revolutions of that memorable oracle (for such it really was to the rest of civilised Europe), which, through so long a course of years, like the Delphic oracle to the nations of old, delivered counsels of civil prudence and of national grandeur, that kept alive for Christendom the recollections of freedom, and refreshed to the enslaved Continent the old ideas of Roman patriotism, which, but for our Parliament, would have uttered themselves by no voices on earth.

* There was another Parliament of this same year 1642, which met in the spring (April, I think), but was summarily dissolved. A small quarto volume, of not unfrequent occurrence, I believe, contains some good specimens of the eloquence then prevalent—it was rich in thought, never wordy—in fact, too parsimonious in words and illustrations; and it breathed a high tone of religious principle as well as of pure-minded patriotism; but, for the reason stated above—its narrow circuit and very limited duration—the general character of the Parliamentary eloquence was ineffective.

That this account of the position occupied by our British Parliament, in relation to the rest of Europe, at least after the publication of the Debates had been commenced by Cave, with the aid of Dr. Johnson, is, in no respect, romantic or overcharged, may be learned from the German novels of the last century, in which we find the British debates as uniformly the morning accompaniment of breakfast, at the houses of the rural gentry, &c., as in any English or Scottish county. Such a sketch would, of course, collect the characteristics of each age, show in what connection these characteristics stood with the political aspects of the time, or with the modes of managing public business (a fatal rock to our public eloquence in England!), and illustrate the whole by interesting specimens from the leading orators in each generation: from Hampden to Pulteney, amongst oppositionists or patriots; from Pulteney to O'Connell; or, again, amongst Ministers, from Hyde to Somers, from Lord Sunderland to Lords Oxford and Bolingbroke; and from the plain, downright Sir Robert Walpole, to the plain, downright Sir Robert Peel.

Throughout the whole of this review, the same 'moral,' if one might so call it, would be apparent—viz. that in proportion as the oratory was high and intellectual, did it travel out into the collateral questions of less instant necessity, but more durable interest; and that, in proportion as the Grecian necessity *was* or was *not* enforced by the temper of the House, or by the pressure of public business—the necessity which cripples the orator, by confining him within the severe limits of the case before him—in that proportion had or had not the oratory of past

generations a surviving interest for modern posterity. Nothing, in fact, so utterly effete—not even old law, or old pharmacy, or old erroneous chemistry—nothing so insufferably dull as political orations, unless when powerfully animated by that spirit of generalisation which only gives the breath of life and the salt which preserves from decay, through every age alike. The very strongest proof, as well as exemplification of all which has been said on Grecian oratory, may thus be found in the records of the British senate.

And this, by the way, brings us round to an aspect of Grecian oratory which has been rendered memorable, and forced upon our notice, in the shape of a problem, by the most popular of our native historians —the aspect, I mean, of Greek oratory in comparison with English. Hume has an essay upon the subject; and the true answer to that essay will open a wide field of truth to us. In this little paper, Hume assumes the superiority of Grecian eloquence, as a thing admitted on all hands, and requiring no proof. Not the proof of this point did he propose to himself as his object; not even the illustration of it. No. All that, Hume held to be superfluous. His object was, to investigate the causes of this Grecian superiority; or, if *investigate* is too pompous a word for so slight a discussion, more properly, he inquired for the cause as something that must naturally lie upon the surface.

What is the answer? First of all, before looking for causes, a man should be sure of his facts. Now, as to the main fact at issue, I utterly deny the superiority of Grecian eloquence. And, first of all, I change the whole field of inquiry by shifting the

comparison. The Greek oratory is all political or judicial: we have those also; but the best of our eloquence, by immeasurable degrees, the noblest and richest, is our religious eloquence. Here, of course, all comparison ceases; for classical Grecian religious eloquence, in Grecian attire, there is none until three centuries after the Christian era, when we have three great orators, Gregory Nazianzen, Basil—of which two I have a very fixed opinion, having read large portions of both—and a third of whom I know nothing. To our Jeremy Taylor, to our Sir Thomas Browne, there is no approach made in the Greek eloquence. The inaugural chapter of the *Holy Dying*, to say nothing of many another golden passage; or the famous passage in the *Urn Buriall*, beginning—'Now, since these bones have rested under the drums and tramplings of three conquests'—have no paralled in literature. The winding up of the former is more, in its effect, like a great tempestuous chorus from the *Judas Maccabeus*, or from Spohr's *St. Paul*, than like human eloquence.

But, grant that this transfer of the comparison is unfair—still, it is no less unfair to confine the comparison on our part to the weakest part of our oratory; but no matter—let issue be joined even here. Then we may say, at once, that, for the intellectual qualities of eloquence, in fineness of understanding, in depth and in large compass of thought, Burke far surpasses any orator, ancient or modern. But, if the comparison were pushed more widely, very certain I am, that, apart from classical prejudice, no qualities of just thinking, or fine expression, or even of artificial ornament, could have been assigned by Hume,

in which the great body of our deliberative and forensic orators fall short of Grecian models; though I will admit, that, by comparison with the Roman model of Cicero, there is seldom the same artful prefiguration of the oration throughout its future course, or the same sustained rhythmus and oratorial tone. The qualities of art are nowhere so prominently expressed, nowhere aid the effect so much, as in the great Roman master.

But, as to Greece, let us now, in one word, unveil the sole advantage which the eloquence of the Athenian *assembly* has over that of the English senate. It is this—*the public business of Athens was as yet simple and unencumbered by details;* the dignity of the occasion was scenically sustained. But, in England, the vast intricacy and complex interweaving of property, of commerce, of commercial interests, of details infinite in number, and infinite in littleness, break down and fritter away into fractions and petty minutiæ, the whole huge labyrinth of our public affairs. It is scarcely necessary to explain my meaning. In Athens, the question before the public assembly was, peace or war—before our House of Commons, perhaps the Exchequer Bills' Bill; at Athens, a league or no league—in England, the Tithe of Agistment Commutation-Bills' Renewal Bill; in Athens—shall we forgive a ruined enemy? in England —shall we cancel the tax on farthing rushlights? In short, with us, the infinity of details overlays the simplicity and grandeur of our public deliberations.

Such was the advantage—a mighty advantage—for Greece. Now, finally, for the use made of this advantage. To that point I have already spoken. By

the clamorous and undeliberative qualities of the Athenian political audience, by its fitful impatience, and vehement arrogance, and fervid partisanship, all wide and general discussion was barred *in limine*. And thus occurred this singular inversion of positions —the greatest of Greek orators was obliged to treat these Catholic questions as mere Athenian questions of business. On the other hand, the least eloquent of British senators, whether from the immense advance in knowledge, or from the custom and usage of Parliament, seldom fails, more or less, to elevate his intense details of pure technical business into something dignified, either by the necessities of pursuing the *historical* relations of the matter in discussion, or of arguing its merits as a case of general finance, or as connected with general political economy, or, perhaps, in its bearings on peace or war. The Grecian was forced, by the composition of his headstrong auditory, to degrade and personalise his grand themes; the Englishman is forced, by the difference of his audience, by old prescription, and by the opposition of a well-informed, hostile party, into elevating his merely technical and petty themes into great national questions, involving honour and benefit to tens of millions.

THE GERMAN LANGUAGE, AND PHILOSOPHY OF KANT.

USING a New Testament, of which (in the narrative parts at least) any one word being given will suggest most of what is immediately consecutive, you evade the most irksome of the penalties annexed to the first breaking ground in a new language: you evade the necessity of hunting up and down a dictionary. Your own memory, and the inevitable suggestions of the context, furnish a dictionary *pro hac vice*. And afterwards, upon advancing to other books, where you are obliged to forego such aids, and to swim without corks, you find yourself already in possession of the particles for expressing addition, succession, exception, inference—in short, of all the forms by which transition or connection is effected (*if, but, and, therefore, however, notwithstanding*), together with all those adverbs for modifying or restraining the extent of a subject or a predicate, which in all languages alike compose the essential frame-work or *extra-linear* machinery of human thought. The filling-up—the *matter* (in a scholastic sense)—may differ infinitely; but the *form*, the periphery, the determining moulds

into which this matter is fused—all this is the same for ever: and so wonderfully limited in its extent is this frame-work, so narrow and rapidly revolving is the clock-work of connections among human thoughts, that a dozen pages of almost any book suffice to exhaust all the ἔπεα πτερόεντα* which express them. To have mastered these ἔπεα πτερόεντα is in effect to have mastered seven-tenths, at the least, of any language; and the benefit of using a New Testament, or the familiar parts of an Old Testament, in this preliminary drill, is, that your own memory is thus made to operate as a perpetual dictionary or nomenclator. I have heard Mr. Southey say that, by carrying in his pocket a Dutch, Swedish, or other Testament, on occasion of a long journey performed in '*muggy*' weather, and in the inside of some venerable 'old heavy'—such as used to bestow their tediousness upon our respectable fathers some thirty or forty years ago

* Ἔπεα πτερόεντα, literally *winged words*. To explain the use and origin of this phrase to non-classical readers, it must be understood that, originally, it was used by Homer to express the few, rapid, and significant words which conveyed some hasty order, counsel, or notice, suited to any sudden occasion or emergency: *e. g.* 'To him flying from the field the hero addressed these winged words—"Stop, coward, or I will transfix thee with my spear."' But by Horne Tooke, the phrase was adopted on the title-page of his *Diversions of Purley*, as a pleasant symbolic expression for all the non-significant particles, the *articuli* or joints of language, which in his well-known theory are resolved into abbreviations or compendious forms (and therefore rapid, flying, *winged* forms), substituted for significant forms of greater length. Thus, *if* is a non-significant particle, but it is an abbreviated form of an imperative in the second person—substituted for gif, or give, or grant the case—put the case that. All other particles are shown by Horne Tooke to be equally shorthand (or *winged*) substitutions.

—he had more than once turned to so valuable an account the doziness or the dulness of his fellow-travellers, that whereas he had 'booked' himself at the coach-office utterly ἀναλφαβητος, unacquainted with the first rudiments of the given language, he had made his parting bows to his coach brethren (secretly returning thanks to them for their stupidity), in a condition for grappling with any common book in that dialect. One of the polyglot Old or New Testaments published by Bagster, would be a perfect Encyclopædia, or *Panorganon*, for such a scheme of coach discipline, upon dull roads and in dull company. As respects the German language in particular, I shall give one caution from my own experience, to the self-instructor: it is a caution which applies to the German language exclusively, or to that more than to any other, because the embarrassment which it is meant to meet, grows out of a defect of taste characteristic of the German mind. It is this: elsewhere, you would naturally, as a beginner, resort to *prose* authors, since the license and audacity of poetic thinking, and the large freedom of a poetic treatment, cannot fail to superadd difficulties of individual creation to the general difficulties of a strange dialect. But this rule, good for every other case, is *not* good for the literature of Germany. Difficulties there certainly are, and perhaps in more than the usual proportion, from the German peculiarities of poetic treatment; but even these are overbalanced in the result, by the single advantage of being limited in the extent by the metre, or (as it may happen) by the particular stanza. To German poetry there is a known, fixed, calculable limit. Infinity, absolute infinity, is impracticable in

any German metre. Not so with German prose. Style, in any sense, is an inconceivable idea to a German intellect. Take the word in the limited sense of what the Greeks called Συνθεσις ὀνοματαν—*i. e.* the construction of sentences—I affirm that a German (unless it were here and there a Lessing) cannot admit such an idea. Books there are in German, and, in other respects, very good books too, which consist of one or two enormous sentences. A German sentence describes an arch between the rising and the setting sun. Take Kant for illustration: he has actually been complimented by the cloud-spinner, Frederic Schlegel, who is now in Hades, as a most original artist in the matter of style. 'Original' Heaven knows he was! His idea of a sentence was as follows:—We have all seen, or read of, an old family coach, and the process of packing it for a journey to Lordon some seventy or eighty years ago. Night and day, for a week at least, sate the housekeeper, the lady's maid, the butler, the gentleman's gentleman, &c., packing the huge ark in all its recesses, its 'imperials,' its 'wills,' its 'Salisbury boots,' its 'sword-cases,' its front pockets, side pockets, rear pockets, its 'hammer-cloth cellars' (which a lady explains to me as a corruption from *hamper-cloth*, as originally a cloth for hiding a hamper, stored with *viaticum*), until all the uses and needs of man, and of human life, savage or civilised, were met with separate provision by the infinite chaos. Pretty nearly upon the model of such an old family coach packing, did Kant institute and pursue the packing and stuffing of one of his regular sentences. Everything that could ever be needed in the way of explanation, illustration, restraint, inference, by-

clause, or indirect comment, was to be crammed, according to this German philosopher's taste, into the front pockets, side pockets, or rear pockets, of the one original sentence. Hence it is that a sentence will last in reading whilst a man

'Might reap an acre of his neighbour's corn.'

Nor is this any peculiarity of Kant's. It is common to the whole family of prose writers of Germany, unless when they happen to have studied French models, who cultivate the opposite extreme. As a caution, therefore, practically applied to this particular anomaly in German prose-writing, I advise all beginners to choose between two classes of composition—ballad poetry, or comedy—as their earliest school of exercise; ballad poetry, because the form of the stanza (usually a quatrain) prescribes a very narrow range to the sentences; comedy, because the form of dialogue, and the imitation of daily life in its ordinary tone of conversation, and the spirit of comedy naturally suggesting a brisk interchange of speech, all tend to short sentences. These rules I soon drew from my own experience and observation. And the one sole purpose towards which I either sought or wished for aid, respected the pronunciation; not so much for attaining a just one (which I was satisfied could not be realised out of Germany, or, at least, out of a daily intercourse with Germans) as for preventing the formation, unawares, of a radically false one. The guttural and palatine sounds of the *ch*, and some other German peculiarities, cannot be acquired without constant practice. But the false Westphalian or Jewish pronunciation of the vowels, diphthongs, &c.,

may easily be forestalled, though the true delicacy of Meissen should happen to be missed. Thus much guidance I purchased, with a very few guineas, from my young Dresden tutor, who was most anxious for permission to extend his assistance; but this I would not hear of: and, in the spirit of fierce (perhaps foolish) independence, which governed most of my actions at that time of life, I did all the rest for myself.

> 'It was a banner broad unfurl'd,
> The picture of that western world.'

These, or words like these, in which Wordsworth conveys the sudden apocalypse, as by an apparition, to an ardent and sympathising spirit, of the stupendous world of America, rising, at once, like an exhalation, with all its shadowy forests, its endless savannas, and its pomp of solitary waters—well and truly might I have applied to my first launching upon that vast billowy ocean of the German literature. As a past literature, as a literature of inheritance and tradition, the German was nothing. Ancestral titles it had none; or none comparable to those of England, Spain, or even Italy; and there, also, it resembled America, as contrasted with the ancient world of Asia, Europe, and North Africa.* But, if its inheritance were nothing, its prospects, and the scale of its present development, were in the amplest style of American grandeur. *Ten thousand* new books, we are assured

* It has been rather too much forgotten, that Africa, from the northern margin of Bilidulgerid and the Great Desert, southwards—everywhere, in short, beyond Egypt, Cyrene, and the modern Barbary States—belongs, as much as America, to the New World—the world unknown to the ancients.

by Menzel, an author of high reputation—a *literal myriad*—is considerably below the number annually poured from all quarters of Germany, into the vast reservoir of Leipsic; spawn infinite, no doubt, of crazy dotage, of dreaming imbecility, of wickedness, of frenzy, through every phasis of Babylonian confusion; yet, also, teeming and heaving with life and the instincts of truth—of truth hunting and chasing in the broad daylight, or of truth groping in the chambers of darkness; sometimes seen as it displays its cornucopia of tropical fruitage; sometimes heard dimly, and in promise, working its way through diamond mines. Not the tropics, not the ocean, not life itself, is such a type of variety, of infinite forms, or of creative power, as the German literature, in its recent motions (say for the last twenty years), gathering, like the Danube, a fresh volume of power at every stage of its advance. A banner it was, indeed, to me of miraculous promise, and suddenly unfurled. It seemed, in those days, an El Dorado as true and undeceiving as it was evidently inexhaustible. And the central object in this interminable wilderness of what then seemed imperishable bloom and verdure—the very tree of knowledge in the midst of this Eden—was the new or transcendental philosophy of Immanuel Kant.

I have described the gorgeousness of my expectations in those early days of my prelusive acquaintance with German literature. I have a little lingered in painting that glad aurora of my first pilgrimage to the fountains of the Rhine and of the Danube, in order adequately to shadow out the gloom and blight which soon afterwards settled upon the hopes of that

golden dawn. In Kant, I had been taught to believe, were the keys of a new and a creative philosophy. Either '*ejus ductu*,' or '*ejus auspiciis*'—that is, either directly under his guidance, or indirectly under any influence remotely derived from his principles—I looked confidingly to see the great vistas and avenues of truth laid open to the philosophic inquirer. Alas! all was a dream. Six weeks' study was sufficient to close my hopes in that quarter for ever. The philosophy of Kant—so famous, so commanding in Germany, from about the period of the French Revolution—already, in 1805, I had found to be a philosophy of destruction, and scarcely, in any one chapter, so much as *tending* to a philosophy of reconstruction. It destroys by wholesale, and it substitutes nothing. Perhaps, in the whole history of man, it is an unexampled case, that such a scheme of speculation —which offers nothing seducing to human aspirations, nothing splendid to the human imagination, nothing even positive and affirmative to the human understanding—should have been able to found an interest so broad and deep among thirty-five millions of cultivated men. The English reader who supposes this interest to have been confined to academic bowers, or the halls of philosophic societies, is most inadequately alive to the case. Sects, heresies, schisms, by hundreds, have arisen out of this philosophy—many thousands of books have been written by way of teaching it, discussing it, extending it, opposing it. And yet it is a fact, that all its doctrines are negative—teaching, in no case, what we *are*, but simply what we are *not* to believe—and that all its truths are barren. Such being its unpopular character, I cannot but imagine

that the German people have received it with so much ardour, from profound incomprehension of its meaning, and utter blindness to its drift—a solution which may seem extravagant, but is not so; for, even amongst those who have expressly commented on this philosophy, not one of the many hundreds whom I have myself read, but has retracted from every attempt to explain its dark places. In these dark places lies, indeed, the secret of its attraction. Were light poured into them, it would be seen that they are *culs-de-sac*, passages that lead to nothing; but, so long as they continue dark, it is not known whither they lead, how far, in what direction, and whether, in fact, they may not issue into paths connected directly with the positive and the infinite. Were it known that upon every path a barrier faces you insurmountable to human steps—like the barriers which fence in the Abyssinian valley of Rasselas—the popularity of this philosophy would expire at once; for no popular interest can long be sustained by speculations which, in every aspect, are known to be essentially negative and essentially finite. Man's nature has something of infinity within itself, which requires a corresponding infinity in its objects. We are told, indeed, by Mr. Bulwer, that the Kantian system has ceased to be of any authority in Germany—that it is defunct, in fact—and that we have first begun to import it into England, after its root had withered, or begun to wither, in its native soil. But Mr. Bulwer is mistaken. The philosophy has never withered in Germany. It cannot even be said that its fortunes have retrograded: they have oscillated: accidents of taste and ability in particular professors, or caprices

of fashion, have given a momentary fluctuation to this or that new form of Kantianism,—an ascendency, for a period, to various, and, in some respects, conflicting, modifications of the transcendental system; but all alike have derived their power mediately from Kant. No weapons, even if employed as hostile weapons, are now forged in any armoury but that of Kant; and, to repeat a Roman figure which I used above, all the modern polemic tactics of what is called metaphysics, are trained and made to move either *ejus ductu* or *ejus auspiciis*. Not one of the new systems affects to call back the Leibnitzian philosophy, the Cartesian, or any other of earlier or later date, as adequate to the purposes of the intellect in this day, or as capable of yielding even a sufficient terminology. Let this last fact decide the question of Kant's vitality. *Qui bene distinguit bene docet.* This is an old adage. Now, he who imposes new names upon all the acts, the functions, and the objects of the philosophic understanding, must be presumed to have distinguished most sharply, and to have ascertained with most precision, their general relations—*so long as his terminology continues to be adopted.* This test, applied to Kant, will show that his spirit yet survives in Germany. Frederic Schlegel, it is true, twenty years ago, in his lectures upon literature, assures us that even the disciples of the great philosopher have agreed to abandon his philosophic nomenclature. But the German philosophic literature, since that date, tells another tale. Mr. Bulwer is, therefore, wrong; and, without going to Germany, looking only to France, he will see cause to revise his sentence. Cousin—the philosophic Cousin, the only great name

in philosophy for modern France—familiar as he is with North Germany, can hardly be presumed unacquainted with a fact so striking, if it *were* a fact, as the extinction of a system once so triumphantly supreme as that of Kant; and yet Mr. Bulwer, admiring Cousin as he does, cannot but have noticed his efforts to naturalise Kant in France. Meantime, if it were even true that transcendentalism had lost its hold of the public mind in Germany, *primâ facie*, this would prove little more than the fickleness of that public which must have been wrong in one of the two cases—either when adopting the system, or when rejecting it. Whatever there may be of truth and value in the system, will remain unimpeached by such caprices, whether of an individual or of a great nation; and England would still be in the right to import the philosophy, however late in the day, if it were true even (which I doubt greatly) that she *is* importing it.

Both truth and value there certainly *is* in one part of the Kantian philosophy; and that part is its foundation. I had intended, at this point, to introduce an outline of the transcendental philosophy—not, perhaps, as entering by logical claim of right into any biographical sketch, but as a very allowable digression in the record of that man's life to whom, in the way of hope and of profound disappointment, it had been so memorable an object. For two or three years before I mastered the language of Kant,*

[1] I might have mastered the philosophy of Kant, without waiting for the German language, in which all his capital works are written; for there is a Latin version of the whole, by Born, and a most admirable digest of the cardinal work (admirable for

it had been a pole-star to my hopes, and *in hypothesi* agreeably to the uncertain plans of uncertain knowledge, the luminous guide to my future life—as a life dedicated and set apart to philosophy. Such it was some years *before* I knew it: for, at least ten long years *after* I came into a condition of valueing its true pretensions and measuring its capacities, this same philosophy shed the gloom of something like misanthropy upon my views and estimates of human nature; for man was an abject animal, if the limitations which Kant assigned to the motions of his speculative reason were as absolute and hopeless as, under *his* scheme of the understanding and *his* genesis of its powers, too evidently they were. I belonged to a reptile race, if the wings by which we had sometimes *seemed* to mount, and the buoyancy which had *seemed* to support our flight, were indeed the fantastic delusions which he represented them. Such, and so deep and so abiding in its influence upon my life, having been the influence of this German philosophy, according to all logic of proportions, in selecting the objects of my notice, I might be excused for setting before the reader, in its full array, the analysis of its capital sections. However, in any memorial of a life which professes to keep in view (though but as a secondary purpose) any regard to popular taste, the logic of proportions must bend, after all, to the law of the occasion—to the proprieties of time and place. For the present, therefore, I shall restrict myself to the

its fidelity and the skill by which that fidelity is attained), in the same language, by Rhiseldek, a Danish professor. But this fact, such was the slight knowledge of all things connected with Kant in England, I did not learn for some years.

few sentences in which it may be proper to gratify the curiosity of *some* readers, the two or three in a hundred, as to the peculiar distinctions of this philosophy. Even to these two or three out of each hundred, I shall not venture to ascribe a larger curiosity than with respect to the most general 'whereabouts' of its position—from what point it starts—whence and from what aspect it surveys the ground—and by what links from this starting-point it contrives to connect itself with the main objects of philosophic inquiry.

Immanuel Kant was originally a dogmatist in the school of Leibnitz and Wolf; that is, according to his trisection of all philosophy into dogmatic, sceptical, and critical, he was, upon all questions, disposed to a strong *affirmative* creed, without courting any particular examination into the grounds of this creed, or into its assailable points. From this slumber, as it is called by himself, he was suddenly aroused by the Humian doctrine of cause and effect. This celebrated essay on the nature of necessary connection—so thoroughly misapprehended at the date of its first publication to the world by its *soi-disant* opponents, Oswald, Beattie, &c., and so imperfectly comprehended since then by various *soi-disant* defenders—became in effect the 'occasional cause' (in the phrase of the logicians) of the entire subsequent philosophic scheme of Kant—every section of which arose upon the accidental opening made to analogical trains of thought, by this memorable effort of scepticism, applied by Hume to one capital phenomenon among the necessities of the human understanding. What is the nature of Hume's scepticism as applied to this

phenomenon? What is the main thesis of his celebrated essay on cause and effect? For few, indeed, are they who really know anything about it. If a man really understands it, a very few words will avail to explain the *nodus*. Let us try. It is a necessity of the *human* understanding (very probably not a necessity of a higher order of intelligences) to connect its experiences by means of the idea of *cause* and its correlate, *effect:* and when Beattie, Oswald, Reid, &c. were exhausting themselves in proofs of the indispensableness of this idea, they were fighting with shadows; for no man had ever questioned the practical necessity for such an idea to the coherency of human thinking. Not the practical necessity, but the internal consistency of this notion, and the original right to such a notion, was the point of inquisition. For, attend, courteous reader, and three separate propositions will set before your eyes the difficulty. *First Prop.*, which, for the sake of greater precision, permit me to throw into Latin:—*Non datur aliquid* [A] *quo posito ponitur aliud* [B] *à priori;* that is, in other words, You cannot lay your hands upon that one object or phenomenon [A] in the whole circle of natural existences, which, being assumed, will entitle you to assume *à priori*, any other object whatsoever [B] as succeeding it. You could not, I say, of any object or phenomenon whatever, assume this succession *à priori*—that is, *previously to experience. Second Prop.* But, if the succession of B to A be made known to you, not *à priori* (by the involution of B in the idea of A), but by experience, then you cannot ascribe *necessity* to the succession: the connection between them is not necessary but contingent. For the very widest ex-

perience—an experience which should stretch over all ages, from the beginning to the end of time—can never establish a *nexus* having the least approximation to necessity; no more than a rope of sand could gain the cohesion of adamant, by repeating its links through a billion of successions. *Prop. Third.* Hence (*i. e.* from the two preceding propositions), it appears that no instance or case of *nexus* that ever can have been offered to the notice of any human understanding, has in it, or, by possibility, could have had anything of necessity. Had the *nexus* been necessary, you would have seen it beforehand; whereas, by Prop. I. *Non datur aliquid, quo posito ponitur aliud à priori.* This being so, now comes the startling fact, that the notion of a *cause* includes the notion of necessity. For, if A (the cause) be connected with B (the effect) only in a casual or accidental way, you do not feel warranted in calling it a cause. If heat applied to ice (A) were sometimes followed by a tendency to liquefaction (B) and sometimes not, you would not consider A connected with B as a cause, but only as some variable accompaniment of the true and unknown cause, which might allowably be present or be absent. This, then, is the startling and mysterious phenomenon of the human understanding—that, in a certain notion, which is indispensable to the coherency of our whole experience, indispensable to the establishing any *nexus* between the different parts and successions of our whole train of notices, we include an accessary notion of necessity, which yet has no justification or warrant, no assignable derivation from any known or possible case of human experience. We have one idea at least—viz. the idea of causation—which

transcends our possible experience by one important element, the element of *necessity*, that never can have been derived from the only source of ideas recognised by the philosophy of this day. A Lockian never can find his way out of this dilemma. The experience (whether it be the experience of sensation or the experience of reflection) which he adopts for his master-key, never will unlock this case; for the sum total of human experience, collected from all ages, can avail only to tell us what *is*, but never what *must be*. The idea of necessity is absolutely transcendant to experience, *per se*, and must be derived from some other source. From what source? Could Hume tell us? No: he, who had started the game so acutely (for with every allowance for the detection made in Thomas Aquinas, of the original suggestion, as recorded in the *Biographia Literaria* of Coleridge, we must still allow great merit of a secondary kind to Hume for his modern revival and restatement of the doctrine), this same acute philosopher broke down confessedly in his attempt to hunt the game down. His solution is worthless.

Kant, however, having caught the original scent from Hume, was more fortunate. He saw, at a glance, that here was a test applied to the Lockian philosophy, which showed, at the very least, its *insufficiency*. If it were good even for so much as it explained—which Burke is disposed to receive as a sufficient warrant for the favourable reception of a new hypothesis—at any rate, it now appeared that there was something which it could *not* explain. But next, Kant took a large step in advance *proprio morte*. Reflecting upon the one idea adduced by Hume, as

transcending the ordinary source of ideas, he began to ask himself, whether it were likely that this idea should stand alone? Were there not other ideas in the same predicament; other ideas including the same element of necessity, and, therefore, equally disowning the parentage assigned by Locke? Upon investigation, he found that there were: he found that there were eleven others in exactly the same circumstances. The entire twelve he denominated categories; and the mode by which he ascertained their number—that there were so many and no more—is of itself so remarkable as to merit notice in the most superficial sketch. But, in fact, this one explanation will put the reader in possession of Kant's system, so far as he could understand it without an express and toilsome study. With this explanation, therefore, of the famous categories, I shall close my slight sketch of the system. Has the reader ever considered the meaning of the term *Category*—a term so ancient and so venerable from its connection with the most domineering philosophy that has yet appeared amongst men? The doctrine of the Categories (or, in its Roman appellation, of the *Predicaments*), is one of the few wrecks from the Peripatetic philosophy which still survives as a doctrine taught by public authority in the most ancient academic institutions of Europe. It continues to form a section in the code of public instruction; and perhaps under favour of a pure accident. For though, strictly speaking, a *metaphysical* speculation, it has always been prefixed as a sort of preface to the *Organon* (or *logical* treatises) of Aristotle, and has thus accidentally shared in the immortality conceded to that most perfect of human

works. Far enough were the Categories from meriting such distinction. Kant was well aware of this: he was aware that the Aristotelian Categories were a useless piece of scholastic lumber: unsound in their first conception; and, though illustrated through long centuries by the schoolmen, and by still earlier Grecian philosophers, never in any one known instance turned to a profitable account. Why, then, being aware that even in idea they were false, besides being practically unsuitable, did Kant adopt or borrow a name laden with this superfetation of reproach—all that is false in theory superadded to all that is useless in practice? He did so for a remarkable reason: he felt, according to his own explanation, that Aristotle had been *groping* [the German word expressive of his blind procedure is *herumtappen*]—groping in the dark, but under a semi-conscious instinct of truth. Here is a most remarkable case or situation of the human intellect, happening alike to individuals and to entire generations—in the situation of yearning or craving, as it were, for a great idea as yet unknown, but dimly and uneasily prefigured. Sometimes the very brink, as it may be called, of such an idea is approached; sometimes it is even imperfectly discovered; but with marks in the very midst of its imperfections, which serve as indications to a person coming better armed for ascertaining the sub-conscious thought which had governed their tentative motions. As it stands in Aristotle's scheme, the idea of a category is a mere lifeless abstraction. Rising through a succession of species to genera, and from these to still higher genera, you arrive finally at a highest genus—a naked abstraction, beyond which no further regress is pos-

sible. This highest genus, this *genus generalissimum*, is, in peripatetic language, a category; and no purpose or use has ever been assigned to any one of these categories, of which ten were enumerated at first, beyond that of classification—*i. e.* a purpose of mere convenience. Even for as trivial a purpose as this, it gave room for suspecting a failure, when it was afterwards found that the original ten categories did not exhaust the possibilities of the case; that other supplementary categories (*post-prædicamenti*) became necessary. And, perhaps, 'more last words' might even yet be added, supplementary supplements, and so forth, by a hair-splitting intellect. Failures as gross as these, revisals still open to revision, and amendments calling for amendments, were at once a broad confession that here there was no falling in with any great law of nature. The paths of nature may sometimes be arrived at in a tentative way; but they are broad and determinate; and, when found, vindicate themselves. Still, in all this erroneous subtilisation, and these abortive efforts, Kant perceived a grasping at some real idea—fugitive indeed and coy, which had for the present absolutely escaped; but he caught glimpses of it continually in the rear; he felt its necessity to any account of the human understanding that could be satisfactory to one who had meditated on Locke's theory as probed and searched by Leibnitz. And in this uneasy state—half sceptical, half creative, rejecting and substituting, pulling down and building up—what was in sum and finally the course which he took for bringing his trials and essays to a crisis? He states this himself, somewhere in the Introduction to his *Critik der reinen*

Vernunft; and the passage is a memorable one. Fifteen years at the least have passed since I read it; and, therefore, I cannot pretend to produce the words; but the substance I shall give; and I appeal to the candour of all his readers, whether they have been able to apprehend his meaning. I certainly did not for years. But, now that I do, the passage places his procedure in a most striking and edifying light. Astronomers, says Kant, had gone on for ages, assuming that the earth was the central body of our system; and insuperable were the difficulties which attended that assumption. At length, it occurred to try what would result from inverting the assumption. Let the earth, instead of offering a fixed centre for the revolving motions of other heavenly bodies, be supposed itself to revolve about some one of these, as the sun. That supposition was tried, and gradually all the phenomena which, before, had been incoherent, anomalous, or contradictory, began to express themselves as parts of a most harmonious system. 'Something,' he goes on to say, 'analogous to this I have practised with regard to the subject of my inquiry—the human understanding. All others had sought their central principle of the intellectual phenomena out of the understanding, in something external to the mind. I first turned my inquiries upon the mind itself. I first applied my examination to the very analysis of the understanding.' In words, not precisely these, but pretty nearly equivalent to them, does Kant state, by contradistinction, the value and the nature of his own procedure. He first, according to his own representation, thought of applying his investigation to the mind itself. Here was a passage

which for years (I may say) continued to stagger and confound me. What! he, Kant, in the latter end of the 18th century, about the year 1787—he the first who had investigated the mind! This was not arrogance so much as it was insanity. Had he said—I, first, upon just principles, or with a fortunate result, investigated the human understanding, he would have said no more than every fresh theorist is bound to suppose, as his preliminary apology for claiming the attention of a busy world. Indeed, if a writer, on any part of knowledge, does *not* hold himself superior to all his predecessors, we are entitled to say—Then, why do you presume to trouble us? It may *look* like modesty, but *is*, in effect, downright effrontery for you to think yourself no better than other critics; you were at liberty to think so whilst no claimant of public notice—as being so, it is most arrogant in you to be modest. This would be the criticism applied justly to a man who, in Kant's situation, as the author of a new system, should use a language of unseasonable modesty or deprecation. To have spoken boldly of himself was a duty; we could not tolerate his doing otherwise. But to speak of himself in the exclusive terms I have described, does certainly seem, and for years did seem to myself, little short of insanity. Of this I am sure that no student of Kant, having the passage before him, can have known heretofore what consistent, what rational interpretation to give it; and, in candour, he ought to own himself my debtor for the light he will now receive. Yet, so easy is it to imagine, after a meaning is once pointed out, and the station given from which it shows itself *as* the meaning—so easy, under these circumstances, is it to

imagine that one has, or that one could have, found it for one's self—that I have little expectation of reaping much gratitude for my explanation. I say this, not as of much importance one way or the other in a single case of the kind, but because a general consideration of this nature has sometimes operated to make me more indifferent or careless as to the publication of commentaries on difficult systems, when I had found myself able to throw much light on the difficulties. The very success with which I should have accomplished the task—the perfect removal of the obstacles in the student's path—were the very grounds of my assurance that the service would be little valued. For I have found what it was occasionally, in conversation, to be too luminous—to have explained, for instance, too clearly a dark place in Ricardo. In such a case, I have known a man of the very greatest powers, mistake the intellectual effort he had put forth to apprehend my elucidation, and to meet it half way, for his own unassisted conquest over the difficulties; and, within an hour or two after, I have had, perhaps, to stand, as an attack upon myself, arguments entirely and recently furnished by myself. No case is more possible: even to apprehend a complex explanation, a man cannot be passive; he must exert considerable energy of mind; and, in the fresh consciousness of this energy, it is the most natural mistake in the world for him to feel the argument which he has, by considerable effort, appropriated to be an argument which he has originated. Kant is the most unhappy champion of his own doctrines, the most infelicitous expounder of his own meaning, that has ever existed. Neither has any other commentator

succeeded in throwing a moonlight radiance upon his philosophy. Yet certain I am, that, were I, or any man, to disperse all his darkness, exactly in that proportion in which we did so—exactly in the proportion in which we smoothed all hindrances—exactly in that proportion would it cease to be known or felt that there had ever been any hindrances to be smoothed. This, however, is digression, to which I have been tempted by the interesting nature of the grievance. In a jesting way, this grievance is obliquely noticed in the celebrated couplet—

> 'Had you seen but these roads before they were made,
> You'd lift up your hands and bless Marshal Wade.'

The pleasant bull here committed conceals a most melancholy truth, and one of large extent. Innumerable are the services to truth, to justice, or society, which never *can* be adequately valued by those who reap their benefits, simply because the transition from the early and bad state to the final or improved state cannot be retraced or kept alive before the eyes. The record perishes. The last point gained is seen; but the starting-point, the point *from* which it was gained, is forgotten. And the traveller never *can* know the true amount of his obligations to Marshal Wade, because, though seeing the roads which the Marshal has created, he can only guess at those which he superseded. Now, returning to this impenetrable passage of Kant, I will briefly inform the reader that he may read it into sense by connecting it with a part of Kant's system, from which it is in his own delivery entirely dislocated. Going forwards some thirty or forty pages, he will find Kant's development of his

own categories. And, by placing in juxtaposition with that development this blind sentence, he will find a reciprocal light arising. All philosophers, worthy of that name, have found it necessary to allow of some great cardinal ideas that transcended all the Lockian origination—ideas that were larger in their compass than any possible notices of sense or any reflex notices of the understanding; and those who have denied such ideas, will be found invariably to have supported their denial by a *vitium subreptionis*, and to have deduced their pretended genealogies of such ideas by means of a *petitio principii*—silently and stealthily putting *into* some step of their *leger-de-main* process everything that they would pretend to have extracted *from* it. But, previously to Kant, it is certain that all philosophers had left the origin of these higher or transcendent ideas unexplained. Whence came they? In the systems to which, Locke replies, they had been called *innate* or *connate*. These were the Cartesian systems. Cudworth, again, who maintained certain '*immutable ideas*' of morality, had said nothing about their origin; and Plato had supposed them to be reminiscences from some higher mode of existence. Kant first attempted to assign them an origin within the mind itself, though not in any Lockian fashion of reflection upon sensible impressions. And this is doubtless what he means by saying that he first had investigated the mind—that is, he first for such a purpose.

Where, then, is it, in what act or function of the mind, that Kant finds the matrix of these transcendent ideas? Simply in the logical forms of the understanding. Every power exerts its agency under

some *laws*—that is, in the language of Kant, by certain *forms*. We leap by certain laws—viz. of equilibrium, of muscular motion, of gravitation. We dance by certain laws. So also we reason by certain laws. These laws, or *formal* principles, under a particular condition, become the categories.

Here, then, is a short derivation, in a very few words, of those ideas transcending sense, which all philosophy, the earliest, has been unable to dispense with, and yet none could account for. Thus, for example, every act of reasoning must, in the first place, express itself in distinct propositions; that is, in such as contain a subject (or that concerning which you affirm or deny something), a predicate (that which you affirm or deny), and a copula, which connects them. These propositions must have what is technically called, in logic, a certain *quantity*, or compass (viz. must be universal, particular, or singular); and again they must have what is called *quality* (that is, must be affirmative, or negative, or infinite): and thus arises a ground for certain corresponding ideas, which are Kant's categories of quantity and quality.

But, to take an illustration more appropriately from the very idea which first aroused Kant to the sense of a vast hiatus in the received philosophies—the idea of *cause*, which had been thrown as an apple of discord amongst the schools, by Hume. How did Kant deduce this? Simply thus: it is a doctrine of universal logic, that there are three varieties of syllogism —viz. 1st, Categoric, or directly declarative [*A is B*]; 2nd, Hypothetic, or conditionally declarative [*If C is D, then A is B*]; 3rd, Disjunctive, or declarative, by means of a choice which exhausts the possible cases

[*A is either B, or C, or D; but not C or D; ergo B*]. Now, the idea of *causation*, or, in Kant's language, the category of Cause and Effect, is deduced immediately, and most naturally, as the reader will acknowledge on examination, from the 2nd or hypothetic form of syllogism, when the relation of dependency is the same as in the idea of causation, and the *necessary* connection a direct type of that which takes place between a cause and its effect.

Thus, then, without going one step further, the reader will find grounds enough for reflection and for reverence towards Kant in these two great results: 1st, That an order of ideas has been established, which all deep philosophy has demanded, even when it could not make good its claim. This postulate is fulfilled. 2ndly, The postulate is fulfilled without mysticism or Platonic reveries. Ideas, however indispensable to human needs, and even to the connection of our thoughts, which came to us from nobody knew whence, must for ever have been suspicious; and, as in the memorable instance cited from Hume, must have been liable for ever to a question of validity. But, deduced as they now are from a matrix within our own minds, they cannot reasonably fear any assaults of scepticism.

Here I shall stop. A reader new to these inquiries may think all this a trifle. But he who reflects a little, will see that, even thus far, and going no step beyond this point, the Kantian doctrine of the Categories answers a standing question hanging aloof as a challenge to human philosophy, fills up a *lacuna* pointed out from the era of Plato. It solves a problem which has startled and perplexed every age: viz. this—that man is in possession, nay, in the hourly

exercise, of ideas larger than he can show any title to. And in another way, the reader may measure the extent of this doctrine, by reflecting that, even so far as now stated, it is precisely coextensive with the famous scheme of Locke. For what is the capital thesis of that scheme? Simply this—that all necessity for supposing immediate impressions made upon our understandings by God, or other supernatural, or antenatal, or connatal, agencies, is idle and romantic; for that, upon examining the furniture of our minds, nothing will be found there which cannot adequately be explained out of our daily experience; and, until we find something that cannot be solved by this explanation, it is childish to go in quest of higher causes. Thus says Locke: and his whole work, upon its first plan, is no more than a continual pleading of this single thesis, pursuing it through all the plausible objections. Being, therefore, as large in its extent as Locke, the reader must not complain of the transcendental scheme as too narrow, even in that limited section of it here brought under his notice.

For the purpose of repelling it, he must do one of two things: either he must show that these categories or transcendent notions are not susceptible of the derivation and genesis here assigned to them—that is, from the forms of the *logos* or formal understanding; or, if content to abide by that derivation, he must allege that there are other categories besides those enumerated, and unprovided with any similar parentage.

Thus much in reply to him who complains of the doctrine here stated; as, 1st, Too narrow; or, 2nd, As insufficiently established. But, 3rd, in reply to him

who wishes to see it further pursued or applied, I say that the possible applications are perhaps infinite. With respect to those made by Kant himself, they are chiefly contained in his main and elementary work, the *Critik der reinen Vernunft;* and they are of a nature to make any man melancholy. Indeed, let a man consider merely this one notion of *causation;* let him reflect on its origin; let him remember that, agreeably to this origin, it follows that we have no right to view anything *in rerum naturâ* as objectively, or in itself a cause; that when, upon the fullest philosophic proof, we call A the cause of B, we do in fact only subsume A under the notion of a cause; we invest it with that function under that relation, that the whole proceeding is merely with respect to a *human* understanding, and by way of indispensable *nexus* to the several parts of our experience; finally, that there is the greatest reason to doubt, whether the idea of *causation* is at all applicable to any other world than this, or any other than a human experience. Let a man meditate but a little on this or other aspects of this transcendental philosophy, and he will find the steadfast earth itself rocking as it were beneath his feet; a world about him, which is in some sense a world of deception; and a world before him, which seems to promise a world of confusion, or '*a world not realised.*' All this he might deduce for himself without further aid from Kant. However, the particular purposes to which Kant applies his philosophy, from the difficulties which beset them, are unfitted for anything below a regular treatise. Suffice it to say here, that, difficult as these speculations are from one or two embarrassing

doctrines on the Transcendental Consciousness, and depressing as they are from their general tendency, they are yet painfully irritating to the curiosity, and especially so from a sort of *experimentum crucis*, which they yield in the progress of their development on behalf of the entire doctrine of Kant—a test which, up to this hour, has offered defiance to any hostile hand. The test or defiance which I speak of, takes the shape of certain *antinomies* (so they are termed), severe adamantine arguments, affirmative and negative, on two or three celebrated problems, with no appeal to any possible decision, but one, which involves the Kantian doctrines. A *quæstio vexata* is proposed —for instance, the *infinite divisibility of matter*; each side of this question, *thesis* and *antithesis*, is argued; the logic is irresistible, the links are perfect, and for each side alternately there is a verdict, thus terminating in the most triumphant *reductio ad absurdum*—viz. that A, at one and the same time and in the same sense, is and is not B, from which no escape is available, but through a Kantian solution. On any other philosophy, it is demonstrated that this opprobrium of the human understanding, this scandal of logic, cannot be removed. This celebrated chapter of *antinomies* has been of great service to the mere polemics of the transcendental philosophy: it is a glove or gage of defiance, constantly lying on the ground, challenging the rights of victory and supremacy so long as it is *not* taken up by any antagonist, and bringing matters to a short decision when it *is*.

One section, and that the introductory section, of the transcendental philosophy, I have purposely omitted, though in strictness not to be insulated or

dislocated from the faithful exposition even of that which I have given. It is the doctrine of Space and Time. These profound themes, so confounding to the human understanding, are treated by Kant under two aspects—1st, as Anchauungen, or *Intuitions* (so the German word is usually translated for want of a better); 2ndly, as forms, *à priori*, of all our other intuitions. Often have I laughed internally at the characteristic exposure of Kant's style of thinking—that he, a man of so much worldly sagacity, could think of offering, and of the German scholastic habits, that any modern nation could think of accepting such cabalistical phrases, such a true and very '*Ignotium per Ignotius*,' in part payment of an explanatory account of Time and Space. Kant repeats these words—as a charm before which all darkness flies; and he supposes continually the case of a man denying his explanations or demanding proofs of them, never once the sole imaginable case—viz. of all men demanding an explanation of these explanations. Deny them! Combat them! How should a man deny, why should he combat, what might, for anything to the contrary appearing, contain a promissory note at two months after date for 100 guineas? No; it will cost a little preliminary work before *such* explanations will much avail any scheme of philosophy, either for the *pro* or the *con*. And yet I do myself really profess to understand the dark words; and a great service it would be to sound philosophy amongst us, if this one word *anschauung* were adequately unfolded and naturalised (as naturalised it might be) in the English philosophic dictionary, by some full Grecian equivalent. Strange that no man acquainted

with German philosophy, should yet have been struck by the fact—or, being struck, should not have felt it important to call public attention to the fact of our inevitable feebleness in a branch of study for which as yet we want the indispensable words. Our feebleness is at once argued by this want, and partly caused. Meantime, as respects the Kantian way of viewing space, by much the most important innovation which it makes upon the old doctrines is—that it considers space as a *subjective* not an *objective* aliquid; that is, as having its whole available foundation lying ultimately in ourselves, not in any external or alien tenure. This one distinction, as applied to space, for ever secures (what nothing else *can* secure or explain) the cogency of geometrical evidence. Whatever is true for any determinations of a space originally included in ourselves, must be true for such determinations for ever, since they cannot become objects of consciousness to us but in and by that very mode of conceiving space, that very form of schematism which originally presented us with these determinations of space, or any whatever. In the uniformity of our own space-conceiving faculty, we have a pledge of the absolute and *necessary* uniformity (or internal agreement among themselves) of all future or possible determinations of space; because they could no otherwise become to us conceivable forms of space, than by adapting themselves to the known conditions of our conceiving faculty. Here we have the *necessity* which is indispensable to all geometrical demonstration: it is a necessity founded in our human organ, which cannot admit or conceive a space, unless as preconforming to these original forms or schematisms.

dislocated from the faithful ex[illegible] were something which I have given. It is th[illegible] a separate existence, Time. These profound them[illegible] then it is altogether human understanding, are t[illegible]ible source of *obligation* aspects—1st, as Anchauu[illegible]such as is indispensable German word is usually [illegible]ometrical demonstration. better); 2ndly, as form[illegible] a regular demonstration intuitions. Often have [illegible] to step downwards, through characteristic exposure [illegible]—No. 8 resting upon 7, that that he, a man of s[illegible] length reduced you to the think of offering, an[illegible]hat Two straight lines cannot that any modern [illegible]w, if space be *subjective* originally such cabalistical [illegible]founded (as respects us and our '*Ignotium per I[illegible]lves—then it is impossible that two planatory accou[illegible]close a space, because the possibility these words—[illegible]atever relating to the determinations flies; and he [illegible]actly co-extensive with (and exactly denying his [illegible], our power to conceive it. Being thus never once [illegible]m its impossibility universally, we can demanding [illegible]monstration upon it. But, on the other Deny th[illegible], of space being *objective*, it is impossible to deny, w[illegible]nce we are to draw our proof of the alleged thing t[illegible]le in two straight lines for enclosing a space. note a[illegible]st we could say is, that hitherto no instance it w[illegible]an found of an enclosed space circumscribed by exp[illegible]traight lines. It would not do to allege our eit[illegible]a inability to conceive, or in imagination to r[illegible]such a circumscription. For, besides that such [illegible] of argument is exactly the one supposed to [illegible]en rejected, it is liable to this unanswerable [illegible]on, so long as space is assumed to have an [illegible]s existence, viz. that the human inability to [illegible]e such a possibility, only argues (what in fact

is often found in other cases) that the *objective* existence of space—*i. e.* the existence of space in itself, and its absolute nature—is far larger than its subjective existence—*i. e.* than its mode of existing *quoad* some particular subject. A being more limited than man might be so framed as to be unable to conceive curve lines; but this subjective inaptitude for those determinations of space would not affect the objective reality of curves, or even their subjective reality for a higher intelligence. Thus, on the hypothesis of an objective existence for space, we should be thrown upon an ocean of possibilities, without a test for saying what was—what was not possible. But, on the other hypothesis, having always in the last resort what is *subjectively* possible or impossible (*i. e.* what is conceivable or not by us, what can or cannot be drawn or circumscribed by a human imagination), we have the means of demonstration in our power, by having the ultimate appeals in our power to a known uniform test—viz. a known human faculty.

This is no trifling matter, and therefore no trifling advantage on the side of Kant and his philosophy, to all who are acquainted with the disagreeable controversies of late years among French geometricians of the first rank, and sometimes among British ones, on the question of mathematical evidence. Legendre and Professor Leslie took part in one such a dispute; and the temper in which it was managed was worthy of admiration, as contrasted with the angry controversies of elder days, if, indeed, it did not err in an opposite spirit, by too elaborate and too calculating a tone of reciprocal flattery. But think as we may of the discussion in this respect, most assuredly it was

painful to witness so infirm a philosophy applied to an interest so mighty. The whole aerial superstructure—the heaven-aspiring pyramid of geometrical synthesis—all tottered under the palsying logic of evidence, to which these celebrated mathematicians appealed. And wherefore?—From the want of any philosophic account of space, to which they might have made a common appeal, and which might have so far discharged its debt to truth, as at least to reconcile its theory with the great outstanding phenomena in the most absolute of sciences. Geometry is the *science* of space: therefore, in any *philosophy* of space, geometry is entitled to be peculiarly considered, and used as a court of appeal. Geometry has these two further claims to distinction—that, 1st, It is the most perfect of the sciences, so far as it has gone; and, 2ndly, That it has gone the farthest. A philosophy of space, which does not consider and does not reconcile to its own doctrines the facts of geometry, which, in the two points of beauty and of vast extent, is more like a work of nature than of man, is, *primâ facie*, of no value. A philosophy of space *might* be false, which should harmonise with the facts of geometry—it *must* be false, if it contradict them. Of Kant's philosophy it is a capital praise, that its very opening section—that section which treats the question of space, not only quadrates with the facts of geometry, but also, by the *subjective* character which it attributes to space, is the very first philosophic scheme which explains and accounts for the cogency of geometrical evidence.

These are the two primary merits of the transcendental theory—1st, Its harmony with mathematics,

and the fact of having first, by its doctrine of space, applied philosophy to the nature of geometrical evidence; 2ndly, That it has filled up, by means of its doctrine of categories, the great *hiatus* in all schemes of the human understanding from Plato downwards. All the rest, with a reserve as to the part which concerns the *practical* reason (or will), is of more questionable value, and leads to manifold disputes. But I contend, that, had transcendentalism done no other service than that of laying a foundation, sought but not found for ages, to the human understanding—namely, by showing an intelligible genesis to certain large and indispensable ideas—it would have claimed the gratitude of all profound inquiries. To a reader still disposed to undervalue Kant's service in this respect, I put one parting question—Wherefore he values Locke? What has *he* done, even if value is allowed in full to his pretensions? Has the reader asked himself *that?* He gave a *negative* solution at the most. He told his reader that certain disputed ideas were *not* deduced thus and thus. Kant, on the other hand, has given him at the least a *positive* solution. He teaches him, in the profoundest revelation, by a discovery in the most absolute sense on record, and the most entirely a single act—without parts, or contributions, or stages, or preparations from other quarters—that these long disputed ideas could not be derived from the experience assigned by Locke, inasmuch as they are themselves *previous conditions under which any experience at all is possible:* he teaches him that these ideas are not mystically originated, but are, in fact, but another phasis of the functions, or, forms of his own understanding; and, finally, he

gives consistency, validity, and a charter of authority, to certain modes of *nexus*, without which the sum total of human experience would be a rope of sand.

In terminating this slight account of the Kantian philosophy, I may mention that in or about the year 1818-19, Lord Grenville, when visiting the lakes of England, observed to Professor Wilson that, after five years' study of this philosophy, he had not gathered from it one clear idea. Wilberforce, about the same time, made the same confession to another friend of my own.

It is not usual for men to meet with their capital disappointments in early life, at least not in youth. For, as to disappointments in love, which are doubtless the most bitter and incapable of comfort, though otherwise likely to arise in youth, they are in this way made impossible at a very early age, that no man can be in love to the whole extent of his capacity, until he is in full possession of all his faculties, and with the sense of dignified maturity. A perfect love, such as is necessary to the anguish of a perfect disappointment, presumes also for its object not a mere girl, but woman, mature both in person and character, and womanly dignity. This sort of disappointment, in a degree which could carry its impression through life, I cannot therefore suppose occurring earlier than at twenty-five or twenty-seven. My disappointment —the profound shock with which I was repelled from German philosophy, and which thenceforwards tinged with cynical disgust towards man in certain aspects, a temper which, originally, I will presume to consider the most benign that can ever have been created— occurred when I was yet in my twentieth year. In

a poem under the title of *Saul*, written many years ago by Mr. Sotheby, and perhaps now forgotten, having never been popular, there occurs a passage of some pathos, in which Saul is described as keeping amongst the splendid equipments of a royal wardrobe, that particular pastoral habit which he had worn in his days of earliest manhood, whilst yet humble and undistinguished by honour, but also yet innocent and happy. There, also, with the same care, he preserved his shepherd's crook, which, in hands of youthful vigour, had been connected with remembrances of heroic prowess. These memorials, in after times of trouble or perplexity, when the burthen of royalty, its cares, or its feverish temptations, pointed his thoughts backwards, for a moment's relief, to scenes of pastoral gaiety and peace, the heart-wearied prince would sometimes draw from their repository, and in solitude would apostrophise them separately, or commune with the bitter-sweet remembrances which they recalled. In something of the same spirit—but with a hatred to the German philosopher such as men are represented as feeling towards the gloomy enchanter, Zamiel or whomsoever, by whose hateful seductions they have been placed within a circle of malign influences—did I at times revert to Kant: though for me his power had been of the very opposite kind; not an enchanter's, but the power of a disenchanter—and a disenchanter the most profound. As often as I looked into his works, I exclaimed in my heart, with the widowed queen of Carthage, using her words in an altered application—

'Quæsivit lucem—*ingemuitque repertâ.*'

Had the transcendental philosophy corresponded to

my expectations, and had it left important openings for further pursuit, my purpose then was, to have retired, after a few years spent in Oxford, to the woods of Lower Canada. I had even marked out the situation for a cottage and a considerable library, about seventeen miles from Quebec. I planned nothing so ambitious as a scheme of *Pantisocracy*. My object was simply profound solitude, such as cannot now be had in any part of Great Britain—with two accessary advantages, also peculiar to countries situated in the circumstances and under the climate of Canada: viz. the exalting presence in an under-consciousness of forests endless and silent, the everlasting sense of living amongst forms so ennobling and impressive, together with the pleasure attached to natural agencies, such as frost, more powerfully manifested than in English latitudes, and for a much longer period. I hope there is nothing fanciful in all this. It is certain that, in England, and in all moderate climates, we are too slightly reminded of nature or the focus of nature. Great heats, or great colds (and in Canada there are both), or great hurricanes, as in the West Indian latitudes, recall us continually to the sense of a powerful presence, investing our paths on every side; whereas, in England, it is possible to forget that we live amongst greater agencies than those of men and human institutions. Man, in fact, 'too much man,' as Timon complained most reasonably in Athens, was then, and is now, our greatest grievance in England. Man is a weed everywhere too rank. A strange place must that be with us, from which the sight of a hundred men is not before us, or the sound of a thousand about us.

Nevertheless, being in this hotbed of man inevitably for some years, no sooner had I dismissed my German philosophy than I relaxed a little that spirit of German abstraction which it had prompted; and, though never mixing freely with society, I began to look a little abroad. It may interest the reader, more than anything else which I can record of this period, to recall what I saw within the ten first years of the century, that was at all noticeable or worthy of remembrance amongst the literati, the philosophers, or the poets of the time. For, though I am not in my academic period from 1804 to 1808, my knowledge of literary men—or men distinguished in some way or other, either by their opinions, their accomplishments, or their position and the accidents of their lives—began from the first year of the century, or, more accurately, from the year 1800; which, with some difficulty and demurs, and with some arguments from the Laureate Pye, the world was at length persuaded to consider the last year of the eighteenth century.*

* Those who look back to the newspapers of 1799 and 1800, will see that considerable discussion went on at that time upon the question, whether the year 1800 was entitled to open the 19th century, or to close the 18th. Mr. Laureate Pye wrote a poem, with a long and argumentative preface on the point.

26/8/12

MORAL EFFECTS OF REVOLUTIONS.

(*May*, 1822.)

In revolutionary times, as when a civil war prevails in a country, men are much worse, as moral beings, than in quiet and untroubled states of peace. So much is matter of history. The English, under Charles II., after twenty years' agitation and civil tumults; the Romans after Sylla and Marius, and the still more bloody proscriptions of the Triumvirates; the French, after the Wars of the League and the storms of the Revolution—were much changed for the worse, and exhibited strange relaxations of the moral principle. But why? What is the philosophy of the case? Some will think it sufficiently explained by the necessity of witnessing so much bloodshed—the hearths and the very graves of their fathers polluted by the slaughter of their countrymen—the *acharnement* which characterises civil contests (as always the quarrels of friends are the fiercest)—and the license of wrong which is bred by war and the majesties of armies. Doubtless this is part of the explanation. But is this all? Mr. Coleridge has referred to this subject in *The Friend;* but, to the best of my remembrance, only noticing it as a fact. Fichte, the celebrated German philosopher, has given us his view

of it (*Idea of War*); and it is so ingenious, that it deserves mention. It is this—'Times of revolution force men's minds inwards: hence they are led amongst other things to meditate on morals with reference to their own conduct. But to subtilise too much upon this subject must always be ruinous to morality, with all understandings that are not very powerful, *i. e.* with the majority, because it terminates naturally in a body of maxims a specious and covert self-interest. Whereas, when men meditate less, they are apt to act more from natural feeling, in which the natural goodness of the heart often interferes to neutralise or even to overbalance its errors.'

PREFIGURATIONS OF REMOTE EVENTS.*

(*April*, 1823.)

WITH a total disbelief in all the vulgar legends of supernatural agency, and *that* upon firmer principles than I fear most people could assign for their incredulity, I must yet believe that the 'soul of the world' has in some instances sent forth mysterious types of the cardinal events, in the great historic drama of our planet. One has been noticed by a German author, and it is placed beyond the limits of any rational scepticism; I mean the coincidence between the augury derived from the flight of the twelve vultures as types of the duration of the Roman empire, *i. e.* Western Empire, for twelve centuries, and the actual event. This augury we know to have been recorded many centuries before its consummation; so that no juggling or collusion between the prophets and the witnesses to the final event can be suspected. Some others might be added. At present I shall notice a coincidence from our own history, which, though not so important as to come

* This is only signed Z in *The London Magazine*, but is clearly labelled 'DE QUINCEY' in ARCHDEACON HESSEY'S marked copy.—H.

within the class of prefigurations I have been alluding to, is yet curious enough to deserve mention. The oak of Boscobel and its history are matter of household knowledge. It is not equally well known, that in a medal, struck to commemorate the installation (about 1636) of Charles II., then Prince of Wales, as a Knight of the Garter, amongst the decorations was introduced an oak-tree with the legend—'Seris factura nepotibus umbram.'

Wks. 9:32

MEASURE OF VALUE.*

(*December*, 1823.)

To the reader.—This article was written and printed before the author heard of the lamented death of Mr. Ricardo.

IT is remarkable at first sight that Mr. Malthus, to whom Political Economy is so much indebted in one chapter (viz. the chapter of Population), should in every other chapter have stumbled at every step. On a nearer view, however, the wonder ceases. His failures and his errors have arisen in all cases from the illogical structure of his understanding; his success was in a path which required no logic. What is the brief abstract of his success? It is this: *he took an obvious and familiar truth, which until his time had been a barren truism, and showed that it teemed with consequences.* Out of this position—*That in the ground which limited human food lay the ground which limited human increase*—united with this other position—*That there is a perpetual nisus in the principle*

* MR. JOHN STUART MILL in his *Principles of Political Economy*, Book III. chaps. i. and ii., makes some interesting and appreciative remarks on De Quincey's settlement of 'the phraseology of value;' also, concerning his illustrations of 'demand and supply, in their relation to value.'

of population to pass that limit, he unfolded a body of most important corollaries. I have remarked in another article on this subject—how entirely these corollaries had escaped all Mr. Malthus's* predecessors in the same track. Perhaps the most striking instance of this, which I could have alleged, is that of the celebrated French work—*L'Ami des Hommes, ou Traité de la Population* (written about the middle of the last century), which sets out deliberately from this principle, expressed almost in the very words of Mr. Malthus,—'*Que la mésure de la Subsistance est celle de la Population ;*'—beats the bushes in every direction about it ; and yet (with the exception of one corollary on the supposed depopulating

* In a slight article on Mr. Malthus, lately published, I omitted to take any notice of the recent controversy between this gentleman—Mr. Godwin—and Mr. Booth ; my reason for which was—that I have not yet found time to read it. But, if Mr. Lowe has rightly represented this principle of Mr. Booth's argument in his late work on the Statistics of England, it is a most erroneous one : for Mr. Booth is there described as alleging against Mr. Malthus that, in his view of the tendencies of the principle of population, he has relied too much on the case of the United States—which Mr. Booth will have to be an extreme case, and not according to the general rule. But of what consequence is this to Mr. Malthus ? And how is he interested in relying on the case of America rather than that of the oldest European country ? Because he assumes a perpetual nisus in the principle of human increase to pass a certain limit, he does not therefore hold that this limit ever *is* passed either in the new countries or in old (or only for a moment, and inevitably to be thrown back within it). Let this limit be placed where it may, it can no more be passed in America than in Europe ; and America is not at all more favourable to Mr. Malthus's theory than Europe. Births, it must be remembered, are more in excess in Europe than in America : though they do not make so much positive addition to the population.

tendency of war and famine) deduces from it none but erroneous and Anti-Malthusian doctrines. That from a truth apparently so barren any corollaries were deducible—was reserved for Mr. Malthus to show. *As* corollaries, it may be supposed that they imply a logical act of the understanding. In some small degree, no doubt; but no more than necessarily accompanies every exercise of reason. Though inferences, they are not remote inferences, but immediate and proximate; and not dependent upon each other, but collateral. Not logic but a judicious choice of his ground placed Mr. Malthus at once in a station from which he commanded the whole truth at a glance—with a lucky dispensation from all necessity of continuous logical processes. But such a dispensation is a privilege indulged to few other parts of Political Economy, and least of all to that which is the foundation of all Political Economy, viz. the doctrine of value. Having therefore repeatedly chosen to tamper with this difficult subject, Mr. Malthus has just made so many exposures of his intellectual infirmities—which, but for this volunteer display, we might never have known. Of all the men of talents, whose writings I have read up to this hour, Mr. Malthus has the most perplexed understanding. He is not only confused himself, but is the cause that confusion is in other men. Logical perplexity is shockingly contagious: and he, who takes Mr. Malthus for his guide through any tangled question, ought to be able to box the compass very well; or before he has read ten pages he will find himself (as the Westmorland guides express it) 'maffled,'—and disposed to sit down and fall a

crying with his guide at the sad bewilderment into which they have both strayed. It tends much to heighten the sense of Mr. Malthus's helplessness in this particular point—that of late years he has given himself the air too much of teasing Mr. Ricardo, one of the 'ugliest customers' in point of logic that ever entered the ring. Mr. Ricardo is a most 'dangerous' man; and Mr. Malthus would do well not to meddle with so 'vicious' a subject, whose arm (like Neate's) gives a blow like the kick of a horse. He has hitherto contented himself very good-naturedly with gently laying Mr. Malthus on his back; but, if he should once turn round with a serious determination to 'take the conceit' out of him, Mr. Malthus would assuredly be 'put into chancery,' and suffer a 'punishment' that must distress his friends.—Amongst those whom Mr. Malthus has perplexed by his logic, I am not one: in matter of logic, I hold myself impeccable; and, to say nothing of my sober days, I defy the devil and all the powers of darkness to get any advantage over me, even on those days when I am drunk, in relation to 'Barbara, Celarent, Darii, or Ferio.'

'Avoid, old Satanas!' I exclaim, if any man attempts to fling dust in my eyes by false syllogism, or any mode of dialectic sophism. And in relation to this particular subject of value, I flatter myself that in a paper expressly applied to the exposure of Mr. Malthus's blunders in his Political Economy, I have made it impossible for Mr. Malthus, even though he should take to his assistance seven worse logicians than himself, to put down my light with their darkness. Meantime, as a labour of shorter

compass, I will call the reader's attention to the following blunder, in a later work of Mr. Malthus's—viz. a pamphlet of eighty pages, entitled, *The Measure of Value, stated and applied* (published in the spring of the present year). The question proposed in this work is the same as that already discussed in his Political Economy—viz. What is the measure of value? But the answer to it is different: in the Political Economy, the measure of value was determined to be a mean between corn and labour; in this pamphlet, Mr. Malthus retracts that opinion, and (finally, let us hope) settles it to his own satisfaction that the true measure is labour; not the quantity of labour, observe, which will produce X, but the quantity which X will command. Upon these two answers, and the delusions which lie at their root, I shall here forbear to comment; because I am now chasing Mr. Malthus's *logical* blunders; and these delusions are not so much logical as economic: what I now wish the reader to attend to—is the blunder involved in the question itself; because that blunder is not economic, but logical. The question is—what is the measure of value? I say then that the phrase—'measure of value' is an equivocal phrase; and, in Mr. Malthus's use of it, means indifferently that which determines value, in relation to the *principium essendi*, and that which determines value, in relation to the *principium cognoscendi*. Here, perhaps, the reader will exclaim—'Avoid, Satanas!' to me, falsely supposing that I have some design upon his eyes, and wish to blind them with learned dust. But, if he thinks *that*, he is in the wrong box: I must and will express scho-

lastic phrases; but, having once done this, I am then ready to descend into the arena with no other weapons than plain English can furnish. Let us therefore translate '*measure of value*' into '*that which determines value:*' and, in this shape, we shall detect the ambiguity of which I complain. For I say, that the word *determines* may be taken subjectively for what determines X in relation to our knowledge, or objectively for what determines X in relation to itself. Thus, if I were to ask—'What determined the length of the racecourse?' and the answer were—'The convenience of the spectators who could not have seen the horses at a greater distance,' or 'The choice of the subscribers,' then it is plain that by the word 'determined,' I was understood to mean 'determined objectively,' *i. e.* in relation to the existence of the object; in other words, what *caused* the racecourse to be this length rather than another length: but, if the answer were——'An actual admeasurement,' it would then be plain that by the word 'determined,' I had been understood to mean 'determined subjectively,' *i. e.* in relation to our knowledge;—what ascertained it?—Now, in the objective sense of the phrase, 'determiner of value,' the measure of value will mean *the ground of value:* in the subjective sense, it will mean *the criterion of value.* Mr. Malthus will allege that he is at liberty to use it in which sense he pleases. Grant that he is, but not therefore in both. Has he then used it in both? He will, perhaps, deny that he has, and will contend that he has used it in the latter sense as equivalent to the *ascertainer* or *criterion of value.* I answer—No: for, omitting a more particular

examination of his use in this place, I say that his use of any word is peremptorily and in defiance of his private explanation to be extorted from the use of the corresponding term in him whom he is opposing. Now he is opposing Mr. Ricardo: his *labour which X commands*—is opposed to Mr. Ricardo's *quantity of labour which will produce X*. Call the first A, the last B. Now, in making B the determiner of value, Mr. Ricardo means that B is the ground of value: *i. e.* that B is the answer to the question—what makes this hat of more value than this pair of shoes? But, if Mr. Malthus means by A the same thing, then by his own confession he has used the term *measure of value* in two senses: on the other hand, if he does not mean the same thing, but simply the *criterion* of value, then he has not used the word in any sense which opposes him to Mr. Ricardo. And yet he advances the whole on that footing. On either ground, therefore, he is guilty of a logical error, which implies that, so far from answering his own question, he did not know what his own question was.

LETTER IN REPLY TO HAZLITT CONCERNING THE MALTHUSIAN DOCTRINE OF POPULATION.

THE LION'S HEAD.*

To the Editor of the London Magazine.

Westmoreland, November 4, 1823.

My dear Sir,—This morning I received your parcel, containing amongst other inclosures, the two last numbers of your journal. In the first of these is printed a little paper of mine on Mr. Malthus; and in the second I observe a letter from Mr. Hazlitt—alleging two passages from the 403rd and 421st pages of his *Political Essays* as substantially anticipating all that I had said. I believe that he *has* anticipated me: in the passage relating to the geometric and arithmetic ratios, it is clear that he has: in the other passage, which objects to Mr. Malthus's use of the term *perfection*, that he has represented it under contradictory predicates, it is not equally clear; for I do not find my own meaning so rigorously expressed as

* This was the heading under which correspondence appeared in *The London Magazine* at that date.—H.

to exclude another * interpretation even now when I know what to look for; and, without knowing what to

* What other interpretation? An interpretation which makes Mr. Hazlitt's argument coincide with one frequently urged against Mr. Malthus—viz. 'that in fact he himself relies practically upon *moral restraint* as one great check to Population, though denying that any great revolution in the moral nature of man is practicable.' But so long as Mr. Malthus means, by a *great revolution*, a revolution in the sense which he imputes to Mr. Godwin—to Condorcet, &c. viz. a revolution amounting to absolute perfection, so long there is no logical error in all this: Mr. Malthus may consistently rely upon moral restraint for getting rid, suppose, of ninety cases out of every hundred which at present tend to produce an excessive population, and yet maintain that even this tenth of the former excess would be sufficient, at a certain stage of population, to reproduce famines, &c., *i. e.* to reproduce as much misery and vice as had been got rid of. Here there is an absolute increase of moral restraint, but still insufficient for the purpose of preventing misery, &c. For, as soon as the maximum of population is attained, even one single birth in excess (*i. e.* which does more than replace the existing numbers)—*à fortiori*, then, one-tenth of the present excess (though implying that the other nine-tenths had been got rid of by moral restraint) would yet be sufficient to prevent the attainment of a state of perfection. And, if Mr. Malthus had so shaped his argument, whether wrong or right—he would not have offended in point of *logic:* his logical error lies in supposing a state of perfection already existing and yet as brought to nothing by this excess of births: whereas it is clear that such an excess may operate to prevent, but cannot operate to destroy a state of perfection; because in such a state no excess could ever arise; for, though an excess may co-exist with a vast increase of moral restraint, it cannot co-exist with entire and perfect moral restraint; and nothing less than *that* is involved in the term 'perfection.' A perfect state, which allows the possibility of the excess here spoken of, is already an imperfect state. Now, if Mr. Hazlitt says that this is exactly what he means, I answer that I believe it is; because I can in no other way explain his sixth sentence—from the words 'but it is shifting the question' to the end of that sentence. Yet again the

look for, I should certainly not have found it: on the whole, however, I am disposed to think that Mr. Hazlitt's meaning is the same as my own. So much for the *matter* of Mr. Hazlitt's communication: as to the *manner*, I am sorry that it is liable to a construction which perhaps was not intended. Mr. Hazlitt says—'I do not wish to bring any charge of plagiarism in this case;' words which are better fitted to express his own forbearance, than to exonerate me from the dishonour of such an act. But I am unwilling to suppose that Mr. Hazlitt has designedly given this negative form to his words. He says also—'as I have been a good deal abused for my scepticism on that subject, I do not feel quite disposed that any one else should run away with the credit of it.' Here again I cannot allow myself to think that Mr. Hazlitt meant deliberately to bring me before the reader's mind under the odious image of a person who was 'running away' with the credit

seventh sentence (the last) is so expressed as to be unintelligible to me. And all that precedes the sixth sentence, though very intelligible, yet seems the precise objection which I have stated above, and which I think untenable. Nay, it is still less tenable in Mr. Hazlitt's way of putting it than as usually put: for to represent Mr. Malthus as saying that, 'if reason should ever get the mastery over all our actions, we shall then be governed *entirely* by our physical appetites' (which are Mr. Hazlitt's words), would be objected to even by an opponent of Mr. Malthus: why '*entirely?*' why more than we are at present? The utmost amount of the objection is this:—That, relying so much upon moral restraint *practically*, Mr. Malthus was bound to have allowed it more weight *speculatively*, but it is unreasonable to say that in his ideal case of perfection Mr. Malthus has allowed no weight at all to moral restraint: even he, who supposes an increased force to be inconsistent with Mr. Malthus's theory, has no reason to insist upon his meaning a diminished force.

of another. As to 'credit,' Mr. Hazlitt must permit me to smile when I read that word used in that sense: I can assure him that not any abstract consideration of credit, but the abstract idea of a credi*tor* (often putting on a concrete shape, and sometimes the odious concrete of a dun) has for some time past been the animating principle of my labours. Credit therefore, except in the sense of twelve months' credit where now alas! I have only six, is no object of my search: in fact I abhor it: for to be a 'noted' man is the next bad thing to being a 'protested' man. Seriously, however, I sent you this as the first of four notes which I had written on the logical blunders of Mr. Malthus (the other three being taken not from his Essay on Population, but from works more expressly within the field of Political Economy): not having met with it elsewhere, I supposed it my own and sent it to complete the series: but the very first sentence, which parodies the words of Chancellor Oxenstiern—('Go and see—how *little* logic is required,' &c.), sufficiently shows that, so far from arrogating any great merit to myself for this discovery, I thought it next to miraculous that it should have escaped any previous reviewer of Mr. Malthus.—I must doubt, by the way, whether Mr. Hazlitt has been 'a good deal abused' for these specific arguments against Mr. Malthus; and my reason for doubting is this: about ten or twelve years ago, happening to be on a visit to Mr. Southey, I remember to have met with a work of Mr. Hazlitt's on this subject—*not* that which he quotes, but another (*Reply to Malthus*) which he refers to as containing the same opinions (either *totidem verbis*, or in substance). In Mr. Southey's library,

and in competition with Mr. Southey's conversation, a man may be pardoned for not studying any one book exclusively: consequently, though I read a good deal of Mr. Hazlitt's *Reply*, I read it cursorily: but, in all that I *did* read, I remember that the arguments were very different from those which he now alleges; indeed it must be evident that the two logical objections in question are by no means fitted to fill an octavo volume. My inference therefore is—that any 'abuse,' which Mr. Hazlitt may have met with, must have been directed to something else in his *Reply;* and in fact it has happened to myself on several occasions to hear this book of Mr. Hazlitt's treated as unworthy of his talents; but never on account of the two arguments which he now claims. I would not be supposed, in saying this, to insinuate any doubt that these arguments are really to be found in the *Reply;* but simply to suggest that they do not come forward prominently or constitute the main argument of that book: and consequently, instead of being opposed, have been overlooked by those who have opposed him as much as they were by myself.

Finally, Mr. Hazlitt calls the coincidence of my objections with his own 'striking:' and thus (though unintentionally, I dare say) throws the reader's attention upon it as a very surprising case. Now in this there is a misconception which, apart from any personal question between Mr. Hazlitt and myself, is worth a few words on its own account for the sake of placing it in a proper light. I affirm then that, considering its nature, the coincidence is *not* a striking one, if by 'striking' be meant surprising: and I

affirm also that it would not have been the more striking if, instead of two, it had extended to two hundred similar cases. Supposing that a thousand persons were required severally to propose a riddle, no conditions or limitations being expressed as to the terms of the riddle, it would be surprising if any two in the whole thousand should agree: suppose again that the same thousand persons were required to solve a riddle, it would now be surprising if any two in the whole thousand should differ. Why? Because, in the first case, the act of the mind is an act of synthesis; and there we may readily conceive a thousand different roads for any one mind; but, in the second case, it is an analytic act; and there we cannot conceive of more than one road for a thousand minds. In the case between Mr. Hazlitt and myself there was a double ground of coincidence for any possible number of writers: first the object was given; *i. e.* we were not left to an unlimited choice of the propositions we were to attack; but Mr. Malthus had himself, by insisting on two in particular (however erroneously) as the capital propositions of his system, determined our attention to these two as the assailable points: secondly, not only was the object given—*i. e.* not only was it predetermined for us where * the error must lie, if there were an error;

* 'Where the error must lie'—*i. e.* to furnish a sufficient answer *ad hominem:* otherwise it will be seen that I do not regard either of the two propositions as essential to Mr. Malthus's theory: and therefore to overthrow those propositions is not to answer that theory. But still, if an author will insist on representing something as essential to his theory which is not so, and challenges opposition to it,—it is allowable to meet him on his own ground.

but the nature of that error, which happened to be logical, predetermined for us the nature of the solution. Errors which are such *materialiter*, *i. e.* which offend against our *knowing*, may admit of many answers—involving more and less of truth. But errors, which are such logically, *i. e.* which offend against the form (or internal law) of our *thinking*, admit of only one answer. Except by failing of any answer at all, Mr. Hazlitt and I could not *but* coincide: as long as we had the same propositions to examine (which were not of our own choice, but pointed out to us *ab extra*), and as long as we understood those propositions in the same sense, no variety was possible except in the expression and manner of our answers; and to that extent a variety exists. Any other must have arisen from our understanding that proposition in a different sense.

My answer to Mr. Hazlitt therefore is—that in substance I think his claim valid; and though it is most true that I was not aware of any claim prior to my own, I now formally forego any claim on my own part to the credit of whatsoever kind which shall ever arise from the two objections to Mr. Malthus's logic in his *Essay on Population*. In saying this, however, and acknowledging therefore a coincidence with Mr. Hazlitt in those two arguments, I must be understood to mean a coincidence only in what really belongs to them; meantime Mr. Hazlitt has used two expressions in his letter to yourself which seem to connect with those propositions other opinions from which I dissent: that I may not therefore be supposed to extend my acquiescence in Mr. Hazlitt's views to these points, I add two short notes upon them: which

however I have detached from this letter—as forming no proper part of its business.—Believe me, my dear Sir, your faithful humble servant. X. Y. Z.

1. Mr. Hazlitt represents Mr. Malthus's error in regard to the different ratios of progression as a *mathematical* error; but the other error he calls *logical*. This may seem to lead to nothing important: it is however not for any purpose of verbal cavil that I object to this distinction, and contend that both errors are logical. For a little consideration will convince the reader that he, who thinks the first error mathematical, will inevitably miss the true point where the error of Mr. Malthus arises; and the consequence of that will be—that he will never understand the Malthusians, nor ever make himself understood by them. Mr. Hazlitt says, 'a bushel of wheat will sow a whole field: the produce of that will sow twenty fields.' Yes: but this is not the point which Mr. Malthus denies: this he will willingly grant: neither will he deny that such a progression goes on by geometrical ratios. If he did, then it is true that his error would be a mathematical one. But all this he will concede. Where then lies his error? Simply in this—that he assumes (I do not mean in words, but it is manifestly latent in all that he says) that the wheat shall be continually resown on the same area of land: he will not allow of Mr. Hazlitt's 'twenty fields:' keep to your original field, he will say. In this lies his error: and the nature of that error is—that he insists upon shaping the case for the wheat in a way which makes it no fair analogy to the case which he has shaped for man. That it is

unfair is evident: for Mr. Malthus does not mean to contend that his men will go on by geometrical progression; or even by arithmetical, upon the *same* quantity of food: no! he will himself say the positive principle of increase must concur with the same sort of increase in the external (negative) condition, which is food. Upon what sort of logic therefore does he demand that his wheat shall be thrown upon the naked power of its positive principle, *not* concurring with the same sort of increase in the negative condition, which in this case is land? It is true that at length we shall come to the end of the land, because that is limited: but this has nothing to do with the race between man and his food, so long as the race is possible. The race is imagined for the sake of trying their several powers: and the terms of the match must be made equal. But there is no equality in the terms as they are supposed by Mr. Malthus. The amount therefore is—that the case which Mr. Malthus everywhere supposes and reasons upon, is a case of false analogy: that is, it is a logical error. But, setting aside the unfairness of the case, Mr. Malthus is perfectly right in his mathematics. If it were fair to demand that the wheat should be constantly confined to the same space of land, it is undeniable that it could never yield a produce advancing by a geometrical progression, but at the utmost by a very slow arithmetical progression. Consequently, taking the case as Mr. Malthus puts it, he is right in calling it a case of arithmetical progression: and his error is in putting that case as a logical counterpart to his other case.

2 Mr. Hazlitt says—'This, Mr. Editor, is the

writer whom "our full senate call all-in-all sufficient."' —And why not? I ask. Mr. Hazlitt's inference is —that, because two propositions in Mr. Malthus's Essay are overthrown, and because these two are propositions to which Mr. Malthus ascribes a false importance, in relation to his theory, therefore that theory is overthrown. But, if an architect, under some fancied weakness of a bridge which is really strong and self-supported, chooses to apply needless props, I shall not injure the bridge by showing these to be rotten props and knocking them away. What is the real strength and the real use of Mr. Malthus's theory of population, cannot well be shown, except in treating of Political Economy. But as to the influence of his logical errors upon that theory, I contend that it is none at all. It is one error to affirm a different law of increase for man and for his food: it is a second error to affirm of a perfect state an attribute of imperfection: but in my judgment it is a third error, as great as either of the others, to suppose that these two errors can at all affect the Malthusian doctrine of Population. Let Mr. Malthus say what he will, the first of those errors is not the true foundation of that doctrine; the second of those errors does not contain its true application.

Two private communications on the paper which refuted Mr. Malthus, both expressed in terms of personal courtesy, for which I am bound to make my best acknowledgments, have reached me through the Editor of the *London Magazine*. One of them refers me 'to the number of the *New Monthly Magazine* for March or April, 1821, for an article on Malthus, in

which the view' taken by myself 'of his doctrine, as an answer to Godwin, seems to have been anticipated.' In reply to this I have only to express my regret that my present situation, which is at a great distance from any town, has not yet allowed me an opportunity for making the reference pointed out.—The other letter disputes the soundness of my arguments—not so much in themselves, as in their application to Mr. Malthus: 'I know not that I am authorised to speak of the author by name: his arguments I presume that I am at liberty to publish: they are as follows: —The first objection appears untenable for this reason: Mr. Malthus treats of the abstract tendency to increase in Man, and in the Food of Man, relatively. Whereas you do not discuss the abstract tendency to increase, but only the *measure* of that increase, which is food. To the second objection I thus answer: Mr. Godwin contends not (I presume) for abstract, essential perfection; but for perfection relating to, and commensurate with, the capabilities of an earthly nature and habitation. All this Mr. Malthus admits *argumenti gratiâ:* and at the same time asserts that Mr. Godwin's estimate in his own terms is incompatible with our state. 8th October, 1823.'—To these answers my rejoinder is this:—The first argument I am not sure that I perfectly understand; and therefore I will not perplex myself or its author by discussing it. To the second argument I reply thus: I am aware that whatsoever Mr. Malthus admits from Mr. Godwin, he admits only *argumenti gratiâ.* But for whatsoever purpose he admits it, he is bound to remember, that he *has* admitted it. Now what is it that he has admitted? A state of per-

fection. This term, under any explanation of it, betrays him into the following dilemma: Either he means *absolute* perfection, perfection which allows of no degrees; or he means (in the sense which my friendly antagonist has supposed) *relative* perfection, *quoad* our present state—*i. e.* a continual approximation to the ideal of absolute perfection, without ever reaching it. If he means the first, then he is exposed to the objection (which I have already insisted on sufficiently) of bringing the idea of perfection under an inconsistent and destructory predicate. If he means the second, then how has he overthrown the doctrine of human perfectibility as he professes to have done? At this moment, though the earth is far from exhausted (and still less its powers), many countries are, according to Mr. Malthus, suffering all the evils which they could suffer if population had reached its maximum: innumerable children are born which the poverty of their parents (no less fatal to them than the limitation of the earth) causes to be thrown back prematurely into the grave. Now this is the precise *kind* of evil which Mr. Malthus anticipates for the human species when it shall have reached its numerical maximum. But in *degree* the evil may then be much less—even upon Mr. Malthus's own showing: for he does not fix any limit to the increase of moral restraint, but only denies that it will ever become absolute and universal. When the principle of population therefore has done its worst, we may be suffering the same kind of evil—but, in proportion to an indefinitely *in*creasing moral restraint, an indefinitely *de*creasing degree of that evil: *i. e.* we may continually approximate to the ideal of perfection:

i. e. if the second sense of perfection be Mr. Godwin's sense, then Mr. Malthus has not overthrown Mr. Godwin.

X. Y. Z.

The following admirable letter * seems to refer to the observations on Kant, contained in the Opium Eater's Letters. Perhaps that acute logician may be able to discover its meaning: or if not, he may think it worth preserving as an illustration of Shakspeare's profound knowledge of character displayed in Ancient Pistol.

Can Neptune sleep?—Is Willich dead?—Him who wielded the trident of Albion! Is it thus you trample on the ashes of my friend? All the dreadful energies of thought—all the sophistry of fiction and the triumphs of the human intellect are waving o'er his peaceful grave. 'He understood not Kant.' Peace then to the harmless invincible. I have long been thinking of presenting the world with a Metaphysical Dictionary—of elucidating Locke's romance.—I await with impatience Kant in English. Give me that! Your letter has awakened me to a sense of your merits. Beware of squabbles; I know the literary infirmities of man. Scott rammed his nose against mortals—he grasped at death for fame to chaunt the victory.

THINE.

How is the Opium Eater?

* This is attached by the Editor of *The London Magazine*.—H.

Rb. 7:37

THE SERVICES OF MR. RICARDO

TO THE

SCIENCE OF POLITICAL ECONOMY,

BRIEFLY AND PLAINLY STATED.*

(*March*, 1824.)

I DO not remember that any public event of our own times has touched me so nearly, or so much with the feelings belonging to a private affliction, as the death of Mr. Ricardo. To me in some sense it *was* a private affliction—and no doubt to all others who knew and honoured his extraordinary talents. For great intellectual merit, wherever it has been steadily contemplated, cannot but conciliate some personal regard: and for my own part I acknowledge that, abstracting altogether from the use to which a man

* MR. J. R. MCCULLOCH in his *Literature of Political Economy* makes the following observations concerning DE QUINCEY'S 'Dialogues of Three Templars on Political Economy':—They are unequalled, perhaps, for brevity, pungency, and force. They not only bring the Ricardian theory of value into strong relief, but triumphantly repel, or rather annihilate, the objections urged against it by Malthus, in the pamphlet now referred to and his Political Economy, and by Say, and others. They may, indeed, be said to have exhausted the subject.

of splendid endowments may apply them—or even supposing the case that he should deliberately apply them to a bad one, I could no more on that account withhold my good wishes and affection from his person—than, under any consideration of their terrific attributes, I could forbear to admire the power and the beauty of the serpent or the panther. Simply on its own account, and without further question, a great intellect challenges, as of right, not merely an interest of admiration—in common with all other exhibitions of power and magnificence—but also an interest of human love, and (where that is necessary) a spirit of tenderness to its aberrations. Mr. Ricardo however stood in no need of a partial or indulgent privilege: his privilege of intellect had a comprehensive sanction from all the purposes to which he applied it in the course of his public life: in or out of parliament, as a senator—or as an author, he was known and honoured as a public benefactor. Though connected myself by private friendship with persons of the political party hostile to his, I heard amongst them all but one language of respect for his public conduct. Those, who stood neutral to all parties, remarked that Mr. Ricardo's voice—though heard too seldom for the wishes of the enlightened part of the nation—was never raised with emphasis upon any question lying out of the province in which he reigned as the paramount authority, except upon such as seemed to affect some great interest of liberty or religious toleration. And, wherever a discussion arose which transcended the level of temporary and local politics (as that for example upon corporal punishments), the weight of authority—which mere

blank ability had obtained for him in the House of Commons—was sure to be thrown into that view of the case which upheld the dignity of human nature. Participating most cordially in these feelings of reverence for Mr. Ricardo's political character, I had besides a sorrow not unmixed with self-reproach arising out of some considerations more immediately relating to myself. In August and September 1821 I wrote *The Confessions of an English Opium-Eater:* and in the course of this little work I took occasion to express my obligations, as a student of Political Economy, to Mr. Ricardo's 'Principles' of that science. For this as for some other passages I was justly * attacked by an able and liberal critic in the *New Edinburgh Review*—as for so many absurd irrelevancies: in that situation no doubt they were so; and of this, in spite of the haste in which I had written the greater part of the book, I was fully aware. However, as they said no more than was true, I was glad to take that or any occasion which I could invent for offering my public testimony of

* Not so however, let me say in passing, for three supposed instances of affected doubt; in all of which my doubts were, and are at this moment, very sincere and unaffected; and, in one of them at least, I am assured by those of whom I have since inquired that my reviewer is undoubtedly mistaken. As another point which, if left unnoticed, might affect something more important to myself than the credit of my taste or judgment,—let me inform my reviewer that, when he traces an incident which I have recorded most faithfully about a Malay—to a tale of Mr. Hogg's, he makes me indebted to a book which I never saw. In saying this I mean no disrespect to Mr. Hogg; on the contrary, I am sorry that I have never seen it: for I have a great admiration of Mr. Hogg's genius; and have had the honour of his personal acquaintance for the last ten years.

gratitude to Mr. Ricardo. The truth is—I thought that something might occur to intercept any more appropriate mode of conveying my homage to Mr. Ricardo's ear, which should else more naturally have been expressed in a direct work on Political Economy. This fear was at length realised—not in the way I had apprehended, viz. by my own death—but by Mr. Ricardo's. And now therefore I felt happy that, at whatever price of good taste, I had in some imperfect way made known my sense of his high pretensions—although unfortunately I had given him no means of judging whether my applause were of any value. For during the interval between Sept. 1821 and Mr. Ricardo's death in Sept. 1823 I had found no leisure for completing my work on Political Economy: on that account I had forborne to use the means of introduction to Mr. Ricardo which I commanded through my private connections or simply as a man of letters: and in some measure therefore I owed it to my own neglect—that I had for ever lost the opportunity of benefiting by Mr. Ricardo's conversation or bringing under his review such new speculations of mine in Political Economy as in any point modified his own doctrines—whether as corrections of supposed oversights, as derivations of the same truth from a higher principle, as further illustrations or proofs of anything which he might have insufficiently developed, or simply in the way of supplement to his known and voluntary omissions. All this I should have done with the utmost fearlessness of giving offence, and not for a moment believing that Mr. Ricardo would have regarded anything in the light of an undue liberty, which in the remotest degree

might seem to affect the interests of a science so eminently indebted to himself. In reality candour may be presumed in a man of first-rate understanding —not merely as a moral quality—but almost as a part of his intellectual constitution *per se;* a spacious and commanding intellect being magnanimous in a manner *suo jure,* even though it should have the misfortune to be allied with a perverse or irritable temper. On this consideration I would gladly have submitted to the review of Mr. Ricardo, as indisputably the first of critics in this department, rather than to any other person, my own review of himself. That I have forfeited the opportunity of doing this—is a source of some self-reproach to myself. I regret also that I have forfeited the opportunity of perhaps giving pleasure to Mr. Ricardo by liberating him from a few misrepresentations, and placing his vindication upon a firmer basis even than that which he has chosen. In one respect I enjoy an advantage for such a service, and in general for the polemic part of Political Economy, which Mr. Ricardo did not. The course of my studies has led me to cultivate the scholastic logic. Mr. Ricardo has obviously neglected it. Confiding in his own conscious strength, and no doubt participating in the common error of modern times as to the value of artificial logic, he has taken for granted that the Aristotelian forms and the exquisite science of distinctions matured by the subtilty of the schoolmen can achieve nothing in substance which is beyond the power of mere sound good sense and robust faculties of reasoning; or at most can only attain the same end with a little more speed and adroitness. But this is a great error: and it was an

ill day for the human understanding when Lord Bacon gave his countenance to a notion, which his own exclusive study of one department in philosophy could alone have suggested. Distinctions previously examined—probed—and accurately bounded, together with a terminology previously established, are the crutches on which all minds—the weakest and the strongest—must alike depend in many cases of perplexity: from pure neglect of such aids, which are to the unassisted understanding what weapons are to the unarmed human strength or tools and machinery to the naked hand of art, do many branches of knowledge at this day languish amongst those which are independent of experiment.

As the best consolation to myself for the lost opportunities with which I have here reproached myself,—and as the best means of doing honour to the memory of Mr. Ricardo,—I shall now endeavour to spread the knowledge of what he has performed in Political Economy. To do this in the plainest and most effectual manner, I shall abstain from introducing any opinions peculiar to myself, excepting only when they may be necessary for the defence of Mr. Ricardo against objections which have obtained currency from the celebrity of their authors—or in the few cases where they may be called for by the errors (as I suppose them to be) even of Mr. Ricardo. —In using this language, I do not fear to be taxed with arrogance: we of this day stand upon the shoulders of our predecessors; and that I am able to detect any errors in Mr. Ricardo—I owe, in most instances, to Mr. Ricardo himself.

X. Y. Z.

EDUCATION.

PLANS FOR THE INSTRUCTION OF BOYS IN LARGE NUMBERS.*

(*April and May*, 1824.)

THIS is the work of a very ingenious man, and records the most original experiment in Education which in this country at least has been attempted since the date of those communicated by the Edgeworths. We say designedly 'in this country;' because to compare it with some continental schemes which have been only recently made known to the English public (and not fully made known even yet) would impose upon us a minute review of those schemes, which would be, *first*, disproportionate to our limits—*secondly*, out of its best situation, because it would be desirable to examine those schemes separately for the direct purpose of determining their own absolute value, and not indirectly and incidentally for the purpose of a comparison. The Madras system, again, is excluded from the comparison—not so much for the reason alleged (pp. 123–5), by the author before us—as though that system were *essentially*

* *Plans for the Government and Liberal Instruction of Boys in large Numbers; Drawn from Experience.* London: 1822. 8vo.

different from his own in its purpose and application: the *purpose* of the Madras system is not exclusively economy of expense, but in combination with that purpose a far greater accuracy (and therefore reality) in the knowledge communicated than could be obtained on the old systems; on this account therefore the possible *application* of the Madras system is not simply to the education of the poor, though as yet the actual application of it may have been chiefly to them, but also to the education of the rich; and in fact it is well known that the Madras system (so far from being *essentially* a system for the poor) has been adopted in some of the great classical schools of the kingdom.* The difference is more logically stated thus—that the Madras system regards singly the quality of the knowledge given, and (with a view to *that*) the mode of giving it: whereas the system,

* The distinguishing excellence of the Madras system is not that it lodges in the pupils themselves the functions which on the old systems belong to the masters, and thus at the same blow by which it secures greater accuracy of knowledge gets rid of a great expense in masters: for this, though a great merit, is a derivative merit: the condition of the possibility of this advantage lies in a still greater—viz. in the artificial *mechanism* of the system by which, when once established, the system works itself, and thus neutralises and sets at defiance all difference of ability in the teachers—which previously determined the whole success of the school. Hence is obtained this prodigious result—that henceforward the blessing of education in its elementary parts is made independent of accident, and as much carried out of the empire of *luck* as the manufacture of woollens or cottons. That it is *mechanic*, is no conditional praise (as alleged by the author before us), but the absolute praise of the Madras system: neither is there any just ground of fear, as he and many others have insinuated, that it should injure the freedom of the human intellect.

which we are going to review, does not confine its view to *man as a being capable of knowledge*, but extends it to *man as a being capable of action, moral or prudential:* it is therefore a much more comprehensive system. The system before us does not exclude the final purpose of the Madras system: on the contrary, it is laudably solicitous for the fullest and most accurate communication of knowledge, and suggests many hints for the attainment of that end as just and as useful as they are enlightened. But it does not stop here: it goes further, and contemplates the whole man with a reference to his total means of usefulness and happiness in life. And hence, by the way, it seems to us essential—that the whole child should on this system be surrendered to the school; *i. e.* that there should be no day-scholars; and this principle we shall further on endeavour to establish on the evidence of a case related by the author himself.* On the whole therefore we have designedly stated our general estimate of the author's system with a reference to that of the Edgeworths; not only because it has the same comprehensiveness of object, and is in some degree a further expansion of their method and their principles; but also because the author himself strikingly resembles the Edgeworths in style and composition of mind; with this single difference perhaps, that the good sense and perception of propriety (of what in French would be called *les convenances*), which in both is the characteristic merit (and, when it

* We have since found that we have not room for it: the case is stated and argued in the Appendix (pp. 220—227); but in our opinion not fairly argued. The appellant's plea was sound, and ought not to have been set aside. [At the end of the Paper I have restored this 'CASE OF APPEAL' from the original work.—H.]

comes into conflict with any higher quality, the characteristic defect),—in him is less coloured by sarcastic and contemptuous feelings; which in all cases are unamiable feelings, and argue some defect of wisdom and magnanimity; but, when directed (as in the Edgeworths they sometimes are) against principles in human nature which lie far beyond the field of their limited philosophy, recoil with their whole strength upon those who utter them. It is upon this consideration of his intellectual affinity with the Edgeworths that we are the less disposed to marvel at his estimate of their labours: that, for instance, at p. 192 he styles their work on education 'inestimable,' and that at p. 122, though he stops short of proposing 'divine honours' to Miss Edgeworth, the course of his logic nevertheless binds him to mean that on Grecian principles such honours are 'due to her.' So much for the general classification and merits of the author, of whom we know nothing more than—that, from his use of the Scotticisms—'succumb,'—'compete,'—and 'in place of' for 'instead of' he ought to be a Scotchman: now then for his system.

Of this we may judge by two criteria—experimentally by its result, or *à priori* by its internal aptitude for attaining its ends. Now as to the result, it must be remembered that—even if the author of any system could be relied on as an impartial witness to its result—yet, because the result of a system of education cannot express itself in any one insulated fact, it will demand as much judgment to abstract from any limited experience what really *is* the result as would have sufficed to determine its merits *à priori* without waiting for any result. Consequently, as it would be

impossible to exonerate ourselves from the necessity of an elaborate act of judgment by any appeal to the practical test of the result—seeing that this result would again require an act of judgment hardly less elaborate for its satisfactory settlement than the *à priori* examination which it had been meant to supersede,—we may as well do that at first which we must do in the end; and, relying upon our own understandings, say boldly that the system is good or bad because on this argument it is evidently calculated to do good or on that argument to do evil, than blindly pronounce—it is good or it is bad, because it has produced—or has failed of producing—such and such effects; even if those effects were easy to collect. In fact, for any conclusive purpose of a practical test, the experience is only now beginning to accumulate: and here we may take occasion to mention that we had ourselves been misinformed as to the duration of the experiment; for a period of four years, we were told, a school had existed under the system here developed: but this must be a mistake, founded perhaps on a footnote at p. 83 which says—'The plan has now been in operation more than four years:' but the plan there spoken of is not the general system, but a single feature of it—viz. the abolition of corporal punishment: in the text this plan had been represented as an immature experiment, having then 'had a trial of nine months' only: and therefore, as more than three years nine months had elapsed from that time to the publication of the book, a note is properly added declaring that the experiment had succeeded, and that the author could 'not imagine any motive strong enough to force him

back to the old practice.' The system generally however must have existed now (*i. e.* November 1823) for nearly eight years at the least: so much is evident from a note at p. 79, where a main regulation of the system is said to have been established 'early in 1816.' Now a period of seven or eight years must have been sufficient to carry many of the senior pupils into active life, and to carry many of the juniors even into situations where they would be brought into close comparison with the pupils of other systems. Consequently, so much experience as is involved in the fact of the systems outliving such a comparison—and in the continued approbation of its founder, who is manifestly a very able and a conscientious man,—so much experience, we say, may be premised for the satisfaction of those who demand practical tests. For ourselves, we shall abide rather in our valuation of the system by the internal evidence of its composition as stated and interpreted by its author. An abstract of all that is essential in this statement we shall now lay before our readers.

What is the characteristic difference, in the fewest possible words, of this system as opposed to all others? We nowhere find this stated in a pointed manner: the author has left it rather to be collected from his general exposition; and therefore we conceive that we shall be entitled to his thanks by placing it in a logical, if possible in an antithetic, shape. In order to this, we ask—what is a school? A school is a body of young persons more or less perfectly organised—which, by means of a certain constitution or system of arrangements (A), aims at attaining a certain object (B). Now in all former schemes of

education this A stood to B the positive quantity sought in the relation of a logical negative (*i. e.* of a *negation* of quantity = *o*), or even of a mathematic negative (*i. e.* of —*x*) :—but on this new system of the author before us (whom, for the want of a better name, we shall call the Experimentalist) A for the first time bears to B the relation of a positive quantity. The terms *positive* and *negative* are sufficiently opposed to each other to confer upon our contradistinction of this system from all others a very marked and antithetic shape; and the only question upon it, which arises, is this—are these terms justified in their application to this case? That they are, will appear thus :—Amongst the positive objects (or B) of every school, even the very worst, we must suppose the culture of morals to be one : a mere day-school may perhaps reasonably confine its pretensions to the disallowance of anything positively bad; because here the presumption is that the parents undertake the management of their children excepting in what regards their intellectual education: but, wherever the heads of a school step into the full duties of a child's natural guardians, they cannot absolve themselves from a responsibility for his morals. Accordingly, this must be assumed of course to exist amongst the positive objects of every boarding-school. Yet so far are the laws and arrangements of existing schools from at all aiding and promoting this object, that their very utmost pretension is—that they do not injure it. Much injustice and oppression, for example, take place in the intercourse of all boys with each other; and in most schools 'the stern edict against *bearing tales*,' causes this to go unredressed (p. 78) : on

the other hand, in a school where a system of nursery-like *surveillance* was adopted, and 'every trifling injury was the subject of immediate appeal to the supreme power' (p. 80), the case was still worse. 'The indulgence of this querulousness increased it beyond all endurance. Before the master had time to examine the justice of one complaint, his attention was called away to redress another; until, wearied with investigation into offences which were either too trifling or too justly provoked for punishment, he treated all complainants with harshness, heard their accusations with incredulity, and thus tended, by a first example, to the re-establishment of the old system.' The issue in any case was—that, apart from what nature and the education of real life did for the child's morals, the school education did nothing at all except by the positive moral instruction which the child might draw from his lessons—*i. e.* from B. But as to A, *i. e.* the school arrangements, either at best their effect was = 0; or possibly, by capricious interference for the regulation of what was beyond their power to regulate, they actually disturbed the moral sense (*i. e.* their effect was = $-x$). Now, on the new system of our Experimentalist, the very laws and regulations, which are in any case necessary to the going on of a school, have such an origin and are so administered as to cultivate the sense of justice and materially to enlarge the knowledge of justice. These laws emanate from the boys themselves, and are administered by the boys. That is to say, A (which on the old system is at best a mere blank, or negation, and sometimes even an absolute negative with regard to B) thus becomes a positive agent in relation to

B—*i. e.* to one of the main purposes of the school. Again, to descend to an illustration of a lower order, in most schools arithmetic is one part of B: now on the new system it is so contrived that what is technically termed *calling over*, which on any system is a necessary arrangement for the prevention of mischief, and which usually terminates there (*i. e.* in an effect = 0), becomes a positive means of cultivating an elementary rule of arithmetic in the junior students—and an attention to accuracy in all: *i. e.* here again, from being simply = 0, A becomes = + x in relation to B. A school in short, on this system, burns its own smoke: The mere negative conditions of its daily goings on, the mere waste products of its machinery, being converted into the positive pabulum of its life and motion. Such then, we affirm, is the brief abstract—antithetically expressed—of the characteristic principle by which the system under review is distinguished from all former systems. In relation to B (which suppose 20 x) A, which heretofore was = —x, or at best = 0, now becomes = + x, or + 2 x, or 3 x, as it may happen. In this lies the merit of the conception: what remains to be inquired—is in what degree, and upon what parts of B, it attains this conversion of A into a positive quantity: and this will determine the merit of the execution. Let us now therefore turn to the details of the book.

The book may be properly distributed into two parts: the first of which from page 1 to page 125 inclusively (comprehending the three first chapters) unfolds and reviews the system: all that remains from page 126 to page 218 inclusively (*i. e.* to the end)—comprehending four chapters—may be considered as a

second or miscellaneous part, treating of some general topics in the business of education, but with a continual reference to the principles laid down in the first part. An appendix, of twenty pages, contains a body of illustrative documents. The first of the three chapters, composing what we have called the first part, is entitled *Outline of the System:* and, as it is very brief, we shall extract it nearly entire.

'A schoolmaster being a governor as well as a teacher, we must consider the boys both as a community and as a body of pupils. The principle of our government is to leave, as much as possible, all power in the hands of the boys themselves: To this end we permit them to elect a committee, which enacts the laws of the school, subject however to the *veto* of the head master. We have also courts of justice for the trial of both civil and criminal causes, and a vigorous police for the preservation of order. Our rewards consist of a few prizes given at the end of each half year to those whose exertions have obtained for them the highest rank in the school; and certain marks which are gained from time to time by exertions of talent and industry. These marks are of two kinds: the most valuable, called premial * marks, will purchase a holiday; the others are received in liquidation of forfeits. Our punishments † are fine and imprisonment. Impositions, public disgrace, and corporeal pain, have been for some years discarded among us.

* '*Premial* marks:' this designation is vicious in point of logic: how is it thus distinguished from the less valuable?

† 'Our punishments,' &c. This is inaccurate: by p. 83 'disability to fill certain offices' is one of the punishments.

To obtain rank is an object of great ambition among the boys; with us it is entirely dependent on the state of their acquirements; and our arrangements according to excellence are so frequent—that no one is safe, without constant exertion, from losing his place. The boys learn almost every branch of study in classes, that the master may have time for copious explanations; it being an object of great anxiety with us, that the pupil should be led to reason upon all his operations. Economy of time is a matter of importance with us: we look upon all restraint as an evil, and to young persons as a very serious evil: we are therefore constantly in search of means for ensuring the effective employment of every minute which is spent in the school-room, that the boys may have ample time for exercise in the open air. The middle state between work and play is extremely unfavourable to the habits * of the pupil: we have succeeded, by great attention to order and regularity, in reducing it almost to nothing. We avoid much confusion by accustoming the boys to march; which they do with great precision, headed by a band of young performers † from their own body.'

Such is the outline of the system as sketched by the author himself: to us however it appears an insufficient outline even for 'the general reader' to whom it is addressed: without having 'any intention of reducing the system to practice,' the most general reader, if he asks for any information at all, will ask for more than this. We shall endeavour therefore to

* 'Habits!' habits of what?

† 'Performers!' *Musical* performers, we presume.

draw up an account of the plan somewhat less meagre, by separating the important from the trivial details. For this purpose we shall begin—1. with the GOVERNMENT of the school; *i. e.* with an account of the *legislative*, the *executive*, and the *judicial* powers, where lodged—held by what tenure—and how administered. The *legislative power* is vested in a committee of boys elected by the boys themselves. The members are elected monthly; the boy, who ranks highest in the school, electing one member; the *two* next in rank another; the *three* next a third; and so on. The head-master as well as all the under-masters are members by virtue of their office. This arrangement might seem likely to throw a dangerous weight in the deliberations of the 'house' into the hands of the executive power, especially as the head-master might pursue Queen Anne's policy under the Tory ministers—and, by introducing the fencing-master—the dancing-master—the riding-master, &c. under the unconstitutional equivocation of the word '*teachers*,' carry a favourite measure in the teeth of the patriotic party. Hitherto however the reigning sovereign has shown so laudable a desire to strengthen those checks upon his own authority which make him a limited monarch—that 'only one teacher has been in the habit of attending the committee's meetings' (p. 5): and, where any teacher himself happens to be interested in the question before the house (*e. g.* in a case of appeal from any decision of his), 'it has lately been the etiquette' for that one who does attend to decline voting. Thus we see that the liberty of the subject is on the growth: which is a sure argument that it has not been abused. In fact, as a fresh proof of the

eternal truth—that in proportion as human beings are honourably confided in, they will *in the gross* become worthy of confidence, it will give pleasure to the reader to be informed that, though this committee 'has the formation of *all* the laws and regulations of the school (excepting such as determine the hours of attendance and the regular amount of exercises to be performed),' yet 'the master's assent has never even in a single instance been withheld or even delayed.' 'I do not remember,' says Sir William Temple in 1683 to his son, 'ever to have refused anything you have desired of me; which I take to be a greater compliment to you than to myself; since for a young man to make none but reasonable desires is yet more extraordinary than for an old man to think them so.' A good arrangement has been adopted for the purpose of combining the benefits of mature deliberation with the vigour and dispatch necessary for sudden emergencies: by a standing order of the committee a week's notice must be given before a new law can be introduced for discussion: in cases of urgency therefore a sort of *orders of council* are passed by a sub-committee composed of two principal officers for the time being: these may of course be intercepted *in limine* by the *veto* of the master; and they may be annulled by the general committee: in any case they expire in a fortnight: and thus not only is a present necessity met, but also an opportunity gained for trying the effect of a law before it is formally proposed. The *executive* body, exclusively of its standing members the upper and lower masters, is composed of a sheriff (whose duties are to levy fines imposed by the court of justice, and to imprison on non-payment)—of a

magistrate, and of two constables. All these officers are elected every month by the committee immediately after its own election. The magistrate is bound, in conjunction with his constables, to detect all offences committed in the school: petty cases of dispute he decides himself, and so far becomes a *judicial* officer: cases beyond his own jurisdiction he sends to the attorney-general, directing him to draw an impeachment against the offending party: he also enforces all penalties below a certain amount. Of the *judicial* body we shall speak a little more at length. The principal officers of the court are the judge who is elected monthly by the committee, and the attorney-general who is appointed at the same time by the master. The court assembles every week: and the jury, consisting of six, is 'chosen by lot from among the whole number of qualified boys:' disqualifications arise in three ways; on account of holding a judicial office, on account of conviction by the court within the preceding month, and on account of youth (or, what we presume to be tantamount, being 'in certain lower classes'). The jury choose their own foreman. The attorney-general and the accused party, if the case be penal, and each disputant, if civil, has a *peremptory* challenge of three, and an unlimited right of challenge *for cause*. The judge decides upon the validity of the objections. Such is the constitution of the court: its forms of proceeding we cannot state in fewer words than those of the Experimentalist, which we shall therefore quote: 'The officers of the court and the jury having taken their seats, the defendant (when the cause is penal) is called to the bar by the crier of the court, and placed between the

constables. The clerk of the court then reads the indictment, at the close of which the defendant is asked if he object to any of the jury—when he may make his challenges (as before stated). The same question is put to the attorney-general. A short time is then allowed the defendant to plead *guilty*, if he be so disposed: he is asked no question however that he may not be induced to tell a falsehood: but, in order to encourage an acknowledgment of the fault, when he pleads *guilty*—a small deduction is made from the penalty appointed by the law for the offence. The consequence is—that at least five out of six of those who are justly accused acknowledge the offence in the first instance. If the defendant be determined to stand his trial, the attorney-general opens the case and the trial proceeds. The defendant may either plead his own cause, or employ a school-fellow as counsel—which he sometimes does. The judge takes notes of the evidence, to assist him in delivering his charge to the jury: in determining the sentence he is guided by the regulations enacted by the committee, which affix punishments varying with the magnitude of the offence and the age of the defendant, but invest the judge with the power of increasing or diminishing the penalty to the extent of one-fourth.' A copy of the sentence is laid before the master, who has of course 'the power of mitigation or pardon.' From the decision of the court there lies an appeal to the committee, which is thus not only the legislative body, but also the supreme court of judicature. Two such appeals however are all that have yet occurred: both were brought by the attorney-general—of course therefore against verdicts of

acquittal; and both verdicts were reversed. Fresh evidence however was in both cases laid before the committee in addition to that which had been heard in the court below; and on this as well on other grounds there was good reason to acquit the jury of all partiality. Whilst appeals have thus been so rare from the verdicts of juries, appeals from the decisions of the magistrate, and even from those of the teachers, have been frequent: generally indeed the decisions have been affirmed by the committee; and, when they have been reversed, in all but two cases the reversal has met with the sanction of the teachers as a body. Even in these two (where, by the way, the original decision was only modified and not annulled), the Experimentalist is himself of opinion (p. 12) that the non-concurrence of the teachers may possibly have been owing to a partiality on their side. So far indeed as his experience had then extended, the Experimentalist tells us (p. 79) that 'one solitary instance only' had occurred in which the verdict of the jury did not coincide with his own opinion. This judgment, deliberately pronounced by so competent a judge, combined with the entire acquiescence in the verdict of the jury which is argued by the non-existence of any appeals except on the side of the crown (and then only in two instances), is a very striking attestation to the spirit of conscientious justice developed in the students by this confidence in their incorruptible integrity. 'Great,' says the Experimentalist, 'great, but of course unexpressed, anxiety has more than once been felt by us—lest the influence of a leading boy, which in every school must be considerable, should overcome the virtue of the jury: but our fears

have been uniformly relieved, and the hopes of the offender crushed, by the voice of the foreman pronouncing, in a shrill but steady tone, the awful word —Guilty!' Some persons, who hate all innovations, will pronounce all this '*mummery*,' which is a very compendious piece of criticism. For ourselves, though we cannot altogether agree with the Experimentalist, who seems to build too much on an assumption that nature and increasing intercourse with human life contribute nothing of themselves without any artificial discipline to the evolution and culture of the sense of justice and to the power of the understanding for discovering where justice lies, yet thus much is evident, 1. That the intellectual faculties must be sharpened by the constant habit of discriminating the just and the unjust in concrete cases such as a real experience of life produces; 2. That the moral sense must be deepened, if it were only by looking back upon so large a body of decisions, and thus measuring as it were, by the resistance which they had often overcome arising out of their own immediate interest, the mightiness of the conscientious power within which had compelled them to such decisions; 3. That all sorts of forensic ability is thus cherished; and much ability indeed of larger application: thus the logical faculty of abstracting the essential from the accidental is involved in the summing up of the judge; in the pleadings for and against are involved the rhetorical arts of narrating facts perspicuously— of arranging arguments in the best order of meeting (therefore of remembering) the counter-arguments; of solving sophisms; of disentangling misrepresent-

of weighing the value of probabilities—to say

nothing of elocution and the arts of style and diction which even the records of the court and the committee (as is urged at p. 105) must tend to cultivate: 4. (to descend to a humbler use) that in this way the master is absolved from the grievous waste of time in administering justice, which on the old system was always imperfect justice that it might waste but little time, and which yet wasted much time though it was imperfect justice. The author's own *moral* of this innovation is as follows (p. 76); and with this we shall leave the subject: 'We shall be disappointed if the intelligent reader have not already discovered that by the establishment of a system of legislation and jurisprudence wherein the power of the master is bounded by general rules, and the duties of the scholar accurately defined, and where the boys are called upon to examine and decide upon the conduct of their fellows, we have provided a course of instruction in the great code of morality which is likely to produce far more powerful and lasting effects than any quantity of mere precept.'

We now pass to the other characteristics of the new system, which seem to lie chiefly in what relates to *economy of time, rewards and punishments*, the *motives to exertion*, and *voluntary labour*. For, as to the *musical performances* (which occur more than twenty times a day), we see no practical use in them except that they regulate the marching; and the marching it is said teaches to measure time: and measuring time accurately contributes 'to the order and celerity with which the various evolutions of the school are performed,' and also to the conquest of 'serious impediments of speech.' But the latter case not

occurring (we presume) very frequently, and marching accurately not being wholly dependant on music,—it appears to us that a practice, which tends to throw an air of fanciful trifling over the excellent good sense of the system in other respects, would be better omitted. *Division into classes* again, though insisted on by the Experimentalist (see pp. 290, 291) in a way which would lead us to suppose it a novelty in his own neighbourhood, is next to universal in England; and in all the great grammar schools has been established for ages. All that distinguishes this arrangement in his use of it—is this, that the classes are variable: that is, the school forms by different combinations according to the subject of study; the boys, who study Greek together, are not the same who study arithmetic together. Dismissing therefore these two arrangements as either not characteristic or not laudably characteristic, we shall make a brief exposition of the others. 1. *Economy of Time*:—'We have been startled at the reflection' (says the Experimentalist)—'that if, by a faulty arrangement, one minute be lost to sixty of our boys, the injury sustained would be equal to the waste of an hour by a single individual.' Hence, as the Experimentalist justly argues, the use of classes; by means of which ten minutes spent by the tutor in explaining a difficult point to a class of ten boys become equal to 100 minutes distributed amongst them severally. Great improvement in the economising of time was on this system derived from exacting 'an almost superstitious punctuality' of the *monitor*, whose duty it is to summon the school to all its changes of employment by ringing a bell. It is worthy of notice, but to us

not at all surprising, that—'when the duty of the monitor was easy, and he had time for play, the exact moment for ringing the bell was but seldom observed: but when, as the system grew more complex, he was more constantly in requisition, it was found that with increased labour came increased perfection: and the same boy who had complained of the difficulty of being punctual when he had to ring the bell only ten times in the day, found his duty comparatively easy when his memory was taxed to a four-fold amount. It is amusing to see what a living timepiece the giddiest boy will become during his week of office. The succession of monitors gradually infuses a habit, and somewhat of a love of punctuality, into the body scholastic itself. The masters also cannot think of being absent when the scholars are waiting for them: and thus the nominal and the real hours of attendance become exactly the same.'—2. *Motives to Exertion.* 'After furnishing the pupil with the *opportunity* of spending his time to the greatest advantage, our next case was to examine how we had supplied him with *motives*' for so spending it (p. 92). These are ranged under five heads,—'Love of knowledge—love of employment—emulation—hope of reward—and fear of punishment,'—and according to what the Experimentalist rightly thinks 'their order of excellence.' The three last, he alleges, are stimuli; and of necessity lose their power by constant use. Love of employment, though a more durable motive, leaves the pupil open to the attractions of any other employment that may chance to offer itself in competition with knowledge. Love of knowledge for its own sake therefore is the mainspring relied on;

insomuch that the Experimentalist gives it as his opinion (p. 96) that 'if it were possible for the pupil to acquire a love of knowledge, and that only during the time he remained at school, he would have done more towards insuring a stock of knowledge in maturer age than if he had been the recipient of as much learning as ever was infused into the passive school-boy' by any means which fell short of generating such a principle of exertion. We heartily agree with him: and we are further of opinion that this love needs not to be generated as an independent birth previously to our commencing the labour of tuition, but that every system of tuition in proportion as it approaches to a good one will inevitably involve the generation of this love of knowledge concurrently with the generation of knowledge itself. Most melancholy are the cases which have come under our immediate notice of good faculties wholly lost to their possessor and an incurable disgust for literature and knowledge founded to our certain knowledge solely on the stupidity and false methods of the teacher, who alike in what he knew or did *not* know was incapable of connecting one spark of pleasurable feeling with any science, by leading his pupils' minds to re-act upon the knowledge he attempted to convey. Being thus important, how shall a love of knowledge be created? According to the Experimentalist, first of all (p. 97—to the word 'zest' in p. 107) by combining the sense of obvious *utility* with all the elementary exercises of the intellect:—secondly (from p. 108—to the word 'rock' in p. 114) by matching the difficulties of the learner exactly with his capacity:—thirdly (from p. 114—to the

word 'attention' in p. 117) by connecting with the learner's progress the sense of continual success:—fourthly (from p. 117—to the word 'co-operation' in p. 121) by communicating clear, vivid and accurate conceptions. The first means is illustrated by a reference to the art of learning a language—to arithmetic—to surveying, and to the writing of 'themes.' Can any boy, for instance, reconcile himself to the loathsome effort of learning '*Propria quæ maribus*' by any the dimmest sense of its future utility? No, we answer with the Experimentalist: and we go farther even than the Experimentalist is disposed to do (p. 98); for we deny the existence of any future utility. We, the reviewer of this book, at eight years of age, though even then passionately fond of study and disdainful of childish sports, passed some of the most wretched and ungenial days of our life in 'learning by *heart*,' as it is called (oh! most ironical misnomer!), *Propria quæ maribus*, '*Quæ genus*,' and '*As in præsenti*,' a three-headed monster worse than Cerberus: we *did* learn them *ad unguem*; and to this hour their accursed barbarisms cling to our memory as ineradicably as the golden lines of Æschylus or Shakspeare. And what was our profit from all this loathsome labour, and the loathsome heap of rubbish thus deposited in the memory? Attend, if you please, good reader: the first professes to teach the irregularities of nouns as to gender (*i. e.* which nouns having a masculine termination are yet feminine, &c.), the second to teach the irregularities of nouns as to number (*i. e.* which want the singular, which the plural), the third to teach the irregularities of verbs (*i. e.* their deviations from the generic forms of the

preterite and the supine): this is what they *profess* to teach. Suppose then their professions realised, what is the result? Why that you have laboriously anticipated a case of anomaly which, if it do actually occur, could not possibly cost more trouble to explain at the time of its occurrence than you are thus premising. This is as if a man should sit down to cull all the difficult cases of action which could ever occur to him in his relations of son, father, citizen, neighbour, public functionary, &c. under the plea that he would thus have got over the labour of discussion before the case itself arrived. Supposing that this could be accomplished, what would it effect but to cancel a benevolent arrangement of providence by which the difficulties of life are distributed with tolerable equality throughout its whole course, and obstinately to accumulate them all upon a particular period. Sufficient for the day is its own evil: dispatch your business as it arises, and every day clears itself: but suffer a few months of unaudited accounts, or of unanswered letters, to accumulate; and a mountain of arrears is before you which years seem insufficient to get rid of. This sort of accumulation arises in the shape of *arrears:* but any accumulation of trouble out of its proper place,—*i. e.* of a distributed trouble into a state of convergement,—no matter whether in the shape of needless anticipation or needless procrastination, has equally the practical effect of converting a light trouble (or none at all) into a heavy and hateful one. The daily experience of books, actual intercourse with Latin authors, is sufficient to teach all the irregularities of that language: just as the daily experience of an English child leads him

without trouble into all the anomalies of his own language. And, to return to the question which we put—'What was our profit from all this loathsome labour?' In this way it was, viz. in the way of actual experience that we, the reviewer of this book, did actually in the end come to the knowledge of those irregularities which the three elegant poems in question profess to communicate. Mark this, reader: the logic of what we are saying—is first, that, if they *did* teach what they profess, they would attain that end by an artificial means far more laborious than the natural means: and secondly, that in fact they do *not* attain their end. The reason of this—is partly the perplexed and barbarous texture of the verse, which for metrical purposes, *i. e.* to keep the promise of metre to the mere technical scansion, is obliged to abandon all those natural beauties of metre in the fluent connection of the words, in the rhythmus, cadence, cæsura, &c. which alone recommend metre as a better or more rememberable form for conveying knowledge than prose: prose, if it has no music, at any rate does not compel the most inartificial writer to dislocate, and distort it into non-intelligibility. Another reason is, that '*As in præsenti*' and its companions, are not so much adapted to the reading as to the writing of Latin. For instance, I remember (we will suppose) this sequence of '*tango tetigi*' from the '*As in P.*' Now, if I am *reading* Latin I meet either with the tense '*tango*,' or the tense '*tetigi*.' In the former case, I have no difficulty; for there is as yet no irregularity: and therefore it is impertinent to offer assistance: in the latter case I *do* find a difficulty, for, according to the models of verbs which

I have learned in my grammar, there is no possible verb which could yield *tetigi:* for such a verb as *tetigo* even ought to yield *tetixi:* here therefore I should be glad of some assistance; but just here it is that I obtain none: for, because I remember '*tango tetigi*' in the direct order, it is quite contrary to the laws of association which govern the memory in such a case, to suppose that I remember the inverted order of *tetigi tango*—any more than the forward repetition of the Lord's prayer ensures its backward repetition. The practical applicability of '*As in præsenti*' is therefore solely to the act of *writing* Latin: for, having occasion to translate the words 'I touched' I search for the Latin equivalent to the English word *touch*—find that it is *tango*, and then am reminded (whilst forming the preterite) that *tango* makes not *tanxi* but '*tetigi.*' Such a use therefore I might by possibility derive from my long labours: meantime even here the service is in all probability doubly superfluous: for, by the time that I am called on to write Latin at all, experience will have taught me that *tango* makes *tetigi;* or, supposing that I am required to write Latin as one of the earliest means for gaining experience, even in that case the very same dictionary which teaches me what is Latin for '*touch*' teaches me what is the irregular preterite and supine of *tango.* And thus the 'upshot' (to use a homely word) of the whole business—is that an effort of memory, so great as to be capable otherwise directed of mastering a science, and secondly (because directed to an unnatural composition, viz. an arrangement of metre, which is at once the rudest and the most elaborately artificial), so disgusting as that no accession of knowledge could

compensate the injury thus done to the simplicity of the child's understanding, by connecting pain and a sense of unintelligible mystery with his earliest steps in knowledge,—all this hyperbolical apparatus and machinery is worked for no one end or purpose that is not better answered by a question to his tutor, by consulting his dictionary, or by the *insensible* progress of daily experience. Even this argument derived from its utter uselessness does not however weigh so much with us as the other argument derived from the want of common-sense, involved in the wilful forestalling and artificial concentrating into one long rosary of anomalies, what else the nature of the case has by good luck dispersed over the whole territory of the Latin language. To be consistent, a tutor should take the same proleptical course with regard to the prosody of the Latin language: every Latin hyper-dissyllable is manifestly accentuated according to the following law: if the penultimate be long, that syllable inevitably claims the accent; if short, inevitably it rejects it—*i. e.* gives it to the ante-penultimate. The determining syllable is therefore the penultimate; and for the due reading of Latin the sole question is about the quantity of the penultimate. According to the logic therefore which could ever have introduced '*As in præsenti*,' the tutor ought to make his pupils commit to memory every individual word in which the quantity was not predetermined by a mechanical rule—(as it is *e. g.* in the gen. plural *ōrum* of the second declension, the *ērunt* of the third per. plurals of the preterite, &c., or the cases where the vowel is long by position). But what man of sense would forbear to cry out in such a case—'Leave

the poor child to his daily reading: practice, under correct tuition, will give him insensibly and without effort all that you would thus endeavour to communicate through a most Herculean exertion.' Whom has it cost any trouble to learn the accentuation of his own language? How has he learned *that?* Simply by copying others—and so much without effort, that the effort (and a very great effort) would have been *not* to copy them. In that way let him learn the quantity of Latin and Greek penultimates. That Edmund Burke could violate the quantity of the word 'Vectigal' was owing to his tutor's ignorance, who had allowed him so to read it; that Lord North, and every other Etonian in the house, knew better—was owing not to any disproportionate effort of memory directed to that particular word, as though they had committed to memory a rule enjoining them to place the accent on the penultimate of the word vectigal: their knowledge no more rested on such an anticipation by express rules of their own experience, than Burke's ignorance of the quantity on the want of such anticipation; the anticipation was needless—coming from a tutor who knew the quantity, and impossible—coming from a tutor who knew it not. At this moment a little boy (three years old) is standing by our table, and repeatedly using the word *mans* for *men:* his sister (five years old), at his age, made the very same mistake: but she is now correcting her brother's grammar, which just at this moment he is stoutly defending—conceiving his dignity involved in the assertion of his own impeccability. Now whence came the little girl's error and its correction? Following blindly the general analogy of the language, she

formed her plural by adding an *s* to the singular: afterwards everybody about her became a daily monitor—a living *Propria quæ maribus*, as she is in her turn to her brother, instructing her that this particular word '*man*' swerved, as to this one particular point, from the general analogy of the language. But the result is just as inevitable from daily intercourse with Latin books, as to the parallel anomalies in that language. In proportion as any case of anomaly could escape the practical regulation of such an intercourse, just in that proportion it must be a rare case, and less important to be known: whatsoever the future experience will be most like to demand, the past experience will be most likely to have furnished. All this we urge not against the Eton grammar in particular: on the contrary, as grammars go, we admire the Eton grammar;* and love it with a filial partiality from early associations (always excepting, however, the three lead-mines of the Eton grammar, '*Propria quæ maribus*,' &c. of which it is not extravagant to say, that the author, though possibly a good sort of a man in his way, has undoubtedly caused more human suffering than Nero, Robespierre, or any other enemy of the human race). Our opposition is to the general principle, which lies at the root of such treatises as the three we have been considering: it will be observed that, making a proper

* Indeed an Etonian must in consistency condemn either the Latin or the Greek grammar of Eton. For, where is the Greek '*Propria quæ maribus*'—'*Quæ genus*'—and '*As in præsenti*'? Either the Greek grammar is defective, or the Latin redundant. We are surprised that it has never struck the patrons of these three beautiful Idylls, that all the anomalies of the Greek language are left to be collected from practice.

allowance for the smallness of the print, these three bodies of absurd anticipations of exceptions, are collectively about equal in quantity, and virtually for the effort to the memory far more than equal, to the whole body of the rules contained in the Accidence and the Syntax: *i. e.* that which exists on account of many thousand cases is put on the same level of value and burthen to the memory, as that which exists on account of itself alone. Here lies the original sin of grammars, the mortal taint on which they all demand regeneration: whosoever would show himself a great artist in the profound but as yet infant art of teaching, should regard all arbitrary taxes upon the memory with the same superstition that a wise lawgiver should regard the punishment of death: the lawgiver, who sets out with little knowledge (and therefore little veneration) of human nature, is perpetually invoking the thunders of the law to compensate the internal weakness of his own laws: and the same spirit of levity disposes inefficient teachers to put in motion the weightiest machinery of the mind for the most trifling purposes: but we are convinced that this law should be engraven on the title page of all elementary books—that the memory is degraded, if it be called in to deliver any individual fact, or any number of individual facts, or for any less purpose than that of delivering a comprehensive law, by means of which the understanding is to *produce* the individual cases of knowledge wanted. Wherever exceptions or insulated cases are noticed, except in notes, which are not designed to be committed to memory, this rule is violated; and the Scotch expression for particularising, viz. *condescend-*

ing upon, becomes applicable in a literal sense: when the Eton grammar, *e. g.* notices *Deus* as deviating in the vocative case from the general law for that declension, the memory is summoned to an unreasonable act of condescension—viz. to load itself almost as heavily for one particular word in one particular case, as it had done by the whole type of that declension (*i. e.* the implicit law for all words contained under it, which are possibly some thousands). But how then would we have such exceptions learnt, if not by an act of the memory? Precisely, we answer, as the meanings of all the words in the language are learned: how are *they* learned? They are known, and they are remembered: but how? Not by any act or effort of the memory: they are *deposited* in the memory from daily intercourse with them: just as the daily occurrences of our lives are recorded in our memories: not through any exertion on our part, or in consequence of previous determination on our parts that we will remember them: on the contrary, we take no pains about them, and often would willingly forget them: but they stay there in spite of us, and are pure *depositions*, settlings, or sediments, with or without our concurrence, from the stream of our daily experience.—Returning from this long excursus on arbitrary taxations of the memory suggested to us by the mention of '*Propria quæ maribus*,' which the Experimentalist objects to as disgusting to children before they have had experience of the cases in which it furnishes assistance (but which we have objected to as in any case barren of all power to assist), we resume the course of our analysis. We left the Experimentalist insisting on the benefit of directing

the studies of children into such channels as that the practical *uses* of their labours may become apprehensible to themselves—as the first mode of producing a love of knowledge. In some cases he admits that the pupil must pass through 'dark defiles,' confiding blindly in his tutor's 'assurance that he will at last emerge into light:' but still contends that in many cases it is possible, and where possible—right, that he should 'catch a glimpse of the promised land.' Thus, for example, to construe the language he is learning—is an act of 'some respectability in his eyes' and its uses apparent: meantime the uses of the grammar are not so apparent until experience has brought him acquainted with the real cases to which it applies. On this account,—without laying aside the grammar, let him be advanced to the dignity of actual translation upon the very *minimum* of grammatical knowledge which will admit of it. Again, in arithmetic, it is the received practice to commence with 'abstract numbers:' but, instead of risking injury to the child's intellect and to his temper by thus calling upon him to add together 'long rows of figures' to which no meaning is attached, he is taught 'to calculate all the various little problems which may be constructed respecting his tops and marbles, their price, and their comparative value.' Here the Experimentalist turns aside for about a page (from 'while,' p. 101—to 'practicable,' p. 102) to 'acknowledge his obligations to what is called Mental Arithmetic—that is, calculation without the employment of written symbols.' Jedediah Buxton's preternatural powers in this way have been long published to the world, and may now be found recorded in

Encyclopædias: the Experimentalist refers also to the more recent cases of Porson and the American youth Zerah Colborn: amongst his own pupils it appears (p. 54) that this exercise is practised in the morning twilight, which for any other study would not furnish sufficient light: he does not pretend to any very splendid marvels: but the following facts, previously recited at pp. 16 and 17, he thinks may astonish 'those who have not estimated the combined power of youth, ardour, and practice.' The lower classes calculate, purely by the mind without any help from pen or pencil, questions respecting interest; determine whether a given year be bissextile or not, &c. &c. The upper classes determine the age of the moon at any given time, the day of the week which corresponds with any day of any month, and year, and Easter Sunday for a given year. They will square any number not exceeding a thousand, extract the square root of a number of not more than five places, determine the space through which a body falls in a given time, the circumference and areas of circles from their diameters, and solve many problems in mensuration: they practise also Mental Algebra, &c. In mental, no less than in written, Arithmetic, 'by assimilating the questions to those which actually occur in the transactions of life,' the pupil is made sensible that he is rising into the usefulness and respectability of real business. The imitative principle of man is thus made to blend with the motive derived from the sense of utility. The same blended feelings, combined with the pleasurable influences of open air, are relied upon for creating the love of knowledge in the practice of surveying. In this operation so large

an aggregate of subsidiary knowledge is demanded,—of arithmetic, for instance—of mensuration—of trigonometry, together with 'the manual facility of constructing maps and plans,' that a sudden revelation is made to the pupils of the uses and indispensableness of many previous studies which hitherto they had imperfectly appreciated; they also 'exercise their discretion in choosing points of observation; they learn expertness in the use, and care in the preservation of instruments: and, above all,—from this feeling that they are really *at work*, they acquire that sobriety and steadiness of conduct in which the elder school-boy is so often inferior to his less fortunate neighbour, who has been removed at an early age to the accompting-house.'—The value of the sense of utility the Experimentalist brings home forcibly to every reader's recollections, by reminding him of the many cases in which a sudden desire for self-education breaks out in a few months after the close of an inefficient education: 'and what,' he asks, 'produces the change? The experience, however short, of the utility of acquisitions, which were perhaps lately despised.' Better then 'to spare the future man many moments of painful retrospection,' by educing this sense of utility, 'while the time and opportunity of improvement remain unimpaired.' Finally, the sense of utility is connected with the peculiar exercises in *composition;* 'a department of education which we confess' (says the Experimentalist) 'has often caused us considerable uneasiness;' an uneasiness which we, on our part, look upon as groundless. For starting ourselves from the same point with the Experimentalist and the authority he alleges—viz. that the

matter of a good theme or essay altogether transcends the reflective powers and the opportunities for observing of a raw school-boy,—we yet come to a very different practical conclusion. The act of composition cannot, it is true, create thoughts in a boy's head unless they exist previously. On this consideration, let all questions of general speculation be dismissed from school exercises: especially questions of *moral* speculation, which usually furnish the thesis of a school-boy's essay: let us have no more themes on Justice—on Ambition—on Benevolence—on the Love of Fame, &c.: for all theses such as these, which treat moral qualities as pure abstractions, are stripped of their *human* interest: and few adults even could write endurably upon such subjects in such a shape; though many might have written very pleasingly and judiciously upon a moral *case*—*i. e.* on a moral question *in concreto*. Grant that a school-boy has no independent thoughts of any value; yet every boy has thoughts dependent upon what he has read—thoughts involved in it—thoughts derived from it: but these he will (*cæteris paribus*) be more or less able to express, as he has been more or less accustomed to express them. The unevolved thoughts which pass through the youngest—the rudest—the most inexperienced brain, are innumerable; not detached—voluntary thoughts, but thoughts inherent in what is seen, talked of, experienced, or read of. To evolve these, to make them apprehensible by others, and often even to bring them within their own consciousness, is very difficult to most people; and at times to all people: and the power, by which this difficulty is conquered, admits of endless culture: and, amongst

the modes of culture, is that of written composition. The true value of this exercise lies in the necessity which it imposes of forming distinct ideas—of connecting them—of disposing them into such an arrangement as that they can be connected—of clothing them in words—and many more acts of the mind: both analytic and synthetic. All that is necessary is—to determine for the young composer his choice of matter: require him therefore to narrate an interesting story which he has formerly read; to rehearse the most interesting particulars of a day's excursion: in the case of more advanced students, let them read one of the English state trials, where the evidence is of a complex character (as the trials on Titus Oates's plot), or a critical dissertation on some interesting question, or anything in short which admits of analysis—of abstraction—of expansion—or exhibition in an altered shape. Subjects for all this are innumerable; and, according to the selection made, more or less opportunity is given for collecting valuable knowledge: but this purpose is collateral to the one we are speaking of: the direct purpose is to exercise the mind in unravelling its own thoughts, which else lie huddled and tangled together in a state unfit for use, and but dimly developed to the possessor's own consciousness. —The three other modes of producing a love of knowledge, which the Experimentalist relies on, viz the proportioning the difficulties to the capacity of the learner, the pleasure of success, and the communication of clear, vivid, and accurate conceptions, are treated with good sense—but not with any great originality: the last indeed (to speak scholastically) contains the other three *eminenter:* for he, who has

once arrived at clear conceptions in relation to the various objects of his study, will not fail to generate for himself the pleasure of success; and so of the rest. But the power of communicating 'accurate conceptions' involves so many other powers, that it is in strictness but another name for the faculty of teaching in general. We fully agree with the Experimentalist (at p. 118), that the tutor would do well 'to provide himself with the various weights commonly spoken of, and the measures of content and of length; to portion off upon his play-ground a land-chain, a rood,' &c. to furnish 'maps' tracing 'the routes of armies;' 'plates exhibiting the costumes' of different nations: and more especially we agree with him (at p. 135) that in teaching the classics the tutor should have at hand 'plates or drawings of ships, temples, houses, altars, domestic and sacred utensils, robes, and of every object of which they are likely to read.' 'It is,' as he says, 'impossible to calculate the injury which the minds of children suffer from the habit of receiving imperfect ideas:' and it is discreditable in the highest degree to the majority of good classical scholars that they have no accurate knowledge of the Roman calendar, and no knowledge at all of the classical coinage, &c.: not one out of every twenty scholars can state the relation of the *sestertius* to the *denarius*, of the Roman *denarius* to the Attic *drachma*, or express any of them in English money. All such defects are weighty: but they are not adequate illustrations of the injury which arises from inaccurate ideas in its most important shape. It is a subject however which we have here no room to enlarge upon.

REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS.—It has already been mentioned that corporal punishments are entirely abolished; * and upon the same principle all such disgrace as 'would destroy self-respect.' 'Expulsion even has been resorted to, rather than a boy should be submitted to treatment which might lead himself and his school-fellows to forget that he was a gentleman.' In this we think the Experimentalist very wise: and precisely upon this ground it was that Mr. Coleridge in his lectures at the Royal Institution attacked Mr. Lancaster's system, which deviated from the Madras system chiefly in the complexity of the details, and by pressing so cruelly in its punishments upon the principle of shame. 'Public disgrace' (as the Experimentalist alleges, p. 83) 'is painful exactly in proportion to the good feeling of the offender:' and thus the good are more heavily punished than the bad. Confinement, and certain disabilities, are the severest punishments: but the former is 'as rare as possible; both because it is attended with unavoidable disgrace' (but what punishment is wholly free from this objection?) 'and because, unlike labour, it is pain without any utility'

* On this point there is however an exception made, which amuses us not a little. 'In a few instances,' says the Experimentalist, 'it has been found or supposed necessary to resent insolence by a blow: but this may be rather called an assertion of private right, than an official punishment. In these cases a single blow has *almost* always been found sufficient, even the rarity of the infliction rendering severity unnecessary.' He insists therefore that this punishment (which, we cannot but think, might have been commuted for a long imprisonment) shall not be called a punishment, nor entered on the public records as such: in which case however it becomes a private 'turn-up,' as the boxers call it, between the boy and his tutor.

(p. 183). The ordinary punishments therefore consist in the forfeiture of rewards, which are certain counters obtained by various kinds of merit. These are of two classes, *penal* (so called from being received as forfeits) and premial, which are obtained by a higher degree of merit, and have higher powers attached to them. Premial counters will purchase *holidays*, and will also purchase *rank* (which on this system is of great importance). A conflict is thus created between pleasure and ambition, which generally terminates in favour of the latter: 'a boy of fourteen, although constantly in the possession of marks sufficient to obtain a holiday per week, has bought but three-quarters of a day's relaxation during the whole of the last year. The same boy purchased his place on the list by a sacrifice of marks sufficient to have obtained for him twenty-six half-holidays.' The purchase of rank, the reader must remember, is no way objectionable—considering the means by which the purchase-money is obtained. One chief means is by study during the hours of leisure—*i. e.* by *voluntary labour:* this is treated of (rather out of its place) in Chap. VII., which ought to be considered as belonging to the first part of the work, viz. to the exposition of the system. Voluntary labour took its rise from the necessity of furnishing those boys, who had no chance of obtaining rank through their talents, with some other means of distinguishing themselves: this is accomplished in two modes: first, by giving rewards for industry exerted out of school hours, and receiving these rewards as the price of rank; making no other stipulation than one, in addition to its being 'tolerably well executed'—viz.

that it shall be in a state of completion. The Experimentalist comments justly at p. 187, on 'the mental dissipation in which persons of talent often indulge' as being 'destructive beyond what can readily be imagined' and as leading to 'a life of shreds and patches.' 'We take care' (says he) 'to reward no boy for fragments, whatever may be their excellence. We know nothing of his exertions until they come before us in a state of completion.' Hence, besides gaining the 'habit of finishing' in early youth, the boy has an interest also in gaining the habit of measuring his own powers: for he knows 'that he can receive neither fame nor profit by instalments; and therefore 'undertakes nothing which he has not a rational hope of accomplishing.' * A second mode of preventing rank from being monopolised by talents is by flinging the school into various arrangements, one of which is founded on 'propriety of manners and general good conduct.'

We have thus gone through a pretty full analysis, and a very accurate one, of the new system as contained in the three first chapters. Of the five miscellaneous chapters, the seventh or last but one (on *voluntary labour*), has been interwoven with our analysis; and the eighth, which contains a comparison of public and private education, we do not purpose to

* The details of the system in regard to the penal and premial counters may be found from pp. 23 to 29. We have no room to extract them: one remark only we must make—that we do not see how it is possible to ascribe any peculiar and incommunicable privileges to the premial as opposed to the penal counters, when it appears that they may be exchanged for each other 'at an established rate.'

notice; the question is very sensibly discussed; but it is useless to discuss any question like this, which is a difficult problem only because it is an unlimited problem. Let the parent satisfy himself about the object he has in view for his child, and let him consider the particular means which he has at his disposal for securing a good private education, and he may then determine it for himself. As far as the attainment of knowledge is concerned,—it is always possible to secure a good public education, and not always possible to secure a good private one. Where either is possible indifferently, the comparison will proceed upon more equal grounds: and inquiry may then be made about the child's destination in future life: for many destinations a public education being much more eligible than for others. Under a perfect indetermination of everything relating to the child —the question is as indeterminable as—whether it is better to go to the Bank through Holborn or through the Strand: the particular case being given, it may then be possible to answer the question; previously it is impossible.——Three chapters therefore remain, viz.—Chap. IV. on Languages; Chap. V. on Elocution; and Chap. VI. on Penmanship.

Chap. IV. On the best method of acquiring Languages.—The Experimentalist had occasion to observe 'that, in the Welsh towns which are frequented by the English, even the children speak both languages with fluency:' this fact, contrasted with the labour and pain entailed upon the boy who is learning Latin (to say nothing of the eventual disgust to literature which is too often the remote consequence), and the drudgery entailed upon the master who teaches Latin,

—and fortified by the consideration, that in the former instance the child learns to speak a new language, but in the latter only to read it,—first drew his attention to the *natural* mode of learning languages, *i. e.* learning them from daily use. This mode never fails with living languages: but how is it to be applied to dead languages? The Experimentalist retorts by asking what is essential to this mode? Partly the necessity which the pupil is laid under of using the language daily for the common intercourse of life, and partly his hearing it spoken by those who thoroughly understand it. 'Stimulus to exertion then, and good models, are the great advantages of this mode of instruction:' and these, he thinks, are secured even for a dead language by his system: the first by the motives to exertion which have already been unfolded; and the second by the acting of Latin dramas (which had been previously noticed in his Exposition of the system). But a third imitation of the *natural* method he places in the use of translations, 'which present the student with a dictionary both of words and phrases arranged in the order in which he wants them,' and in an abstinence from all use of the grammar, until the learner himself shall come to feel the want of it; *i. e.* using it with reference to an experience already accumulated, and not as an anticipation of an experience yet to come. The ordinary objection to the use of translations—that they produce indolent habits, he answers thus: 'We teach by the process of *construing;* and therefore, even with the translation before him, the scholar will have a task to perform in matching the English, word by word, with the language which he is learn-

ing.' For this *natural* method of learning languages he alleges the authority of Locke, of Ascham, and of Pestalozzi. The best method, with those who have advanced to some degree of proficiency, he considers that of double translations—*i. e.* a translation first of all into the mother tongue of the learner, and a re-translation of this translation back into the language of the original. These, with the help of extemporaneous construing, *i. e.* construing any passage at random with the assistance of a master who supplies the meaning of the unknown words as they arise (a method practised, it seems, by Le Febvre the father of Madame Dacier, by others before his time, and by Condillac since)—compose the chief machinery which he employs for the communication of dead languages.

Chap. V. On Elocution.—In this chapter there is not much which is very important. To read well, the Experimentalist alleges, presupposes so much various knowledge, especially of that kind which is best acquired by private reading, and therefore most spares the labour of the tutor, that it ought reasonably to bestow high rank in the school. Private reading is most favourable to the rapid collection of an author's meaning: but for reading well—this is not sufficient: two great constituents of that art remain to be acquired—Enunciation and Inflection. These are best learned by Recitation. Thus far there is no great novelty: the most interesting part of the chapter is what relates to Stammering. This defect is held by the Experimentalist to result from inattention to rhythmus: so much he thinks has been proved by Mr. Thelwall. Whatsoever therefore compels the pupil to an efficient perception of time

and measure, as for example, marching and music (p. 32), he resorts to for its correction. Stammerers, he observes, can all sing: let them be taught to sing therefore, if not otherwise corrigible: and from this let them descend to *recitative:* then to the recitation of verses distinguished by the simplicity of their rhythmus, marching at the same time and marking the accented syllables by the tread of the foot; from this to the recitation of more difficult verses; from that to measured prose; thence to ordinary prose; and lastly to narrative and dialogue.

Chap. VI. Of Penmanship.—This is a subject on which we profess no experience which could warrant us in contradicting a writer who should rest his innovations solely upon that ground: but the writer before us does not rely on the practical issue of his own experiment (he does not even tell us what that issue was), but on certain *à priori* arguments, which we conceive to be ill-reasoned. The amount of the chapter is this—that to write a good running hand is the main object to be aimed at in the art of caligraphy: we will go farther, and concede that it is the sole object, unless where the pupil is educated for a writing-master. Thus far we are agreed; and the question is—as to the best means of attaining this object. On which question the plan here proposed differs from those in use by the very natural error—that what is admitted to be the ultimate object, this plan would make the immediate object. The author starts from a false theory of the practice amongst writing-masters: in order that their pupils may write small and running hands well, writing-masters (as is well-known) begin by exacting from them a long

praxis in large hands. But the rationale of this praxis escapes the Experimentalist: the large hand and the small hand stand related to each other, in the estimate of the masters, as a means to an end; whereas the Experimentalist supposes them to be viewed in the relation simply of two co-ordinate or collateral ends: on which false presumption he grounds what would on his own view be a very sound advice; for justly conceiving that the small hand is of incomparably more use in life, he argues in effect thus: let us communicate the main object, and then (if he has leisure and taste for it) let the pupil direct his attention to the lower object: 'when the running hand is accomplished,' says he, 'the pupil may (if it be thought necessary) learn to write the larger hands according to the received models.' *When* it is acquired! 'Aye, but in order that it *may* be acquired,'—the writing-master will reply, 'I must first teach the larger hands.' As well might the professor of dancing hold out as a tempting innovation to the public—I teach the actual dances, the true practical synthesis of the steps and movements, as it is in fact demanded by the usage of the ball-room: let others teach the analytic elements of the art—the mere useless steps—to those who have time to waste on superfluities. In either art (as in many others) that, which is first (or rather sole) in order of importance, is last in the order of attainment: as an object *per se*, the larger hand is not wanted at all, either before or after the running hand: if it does really contribute nothing to the more accurate formation of the letters, by compelling the pupil to exhibit his aberrations from the *ideal* letter more clearly because on a scale of greater

magnitude (which yet in the second sentence of this chapter our Experimentalist himself admits), then let it be abandoned at once: for not doing this service, it does nothing at all. On the other hand, if this be its specific service, then it is clear that, being no object *per se*, but simply a means to an object, it must have precedency in the order of communication. And the innovation of our Experimentalist is so far (in the literal sense of that word) a *preposterous* inversion of the old usage: and this being the chief principle of his 'plan' we desire to know no more of it; and were not sorry that (p. 178) we found him declining 'to enter into a detail of it.'—The business of the chapter being finished however, there yet remains some little matter of curiosity. 1. The Experimentalist affirms that 'Langford's copper-plate copies, or indeed any other which he has seen, fail' if tried by a certain test: what test? Why this: that 'the large hand seen through a diminishing glass, ought to be reduced into the current hand; and the current hand, magnified, ought to swell into a large hand.' Whereas, on the contrary, 'the large hands reduced appear very stiff and cramped; and the magnified running hand'—'appears little better than a scrawl.' Now to us the result appears in a different light. It is true that the large hands reduced do not appear good running hands according to the standard derived from the actual practice of the world: but why? Simply because they are too good: *i. e.* they are *ideals* and in fact are meant to be so; and have nothing characteristic: they are purely *generic* hands, and therefore want *individualisation:* they are abstractions; but to affect us pleasurably, they should be

concrete expressions of some human qualities, moral or intellectual. Perfect features in a human face arranged with perfect symmetry, affect us not at all, as is well known, where there is nothing characteristic; the latency of the individual in the generic, and of the generic in the individual, is that which gives to each its power over our human sensibilities. And this holds of caligraphy no less than other arts. And *that* is the most perfect hand-writing which unites the *minimum* of deviation from the ideal standard of beauty (as to the form and nexus of the letters) with the *maximum* of characteristic expression. It has long been practically felt, and even expressly affirmed (in some instances even expanded into a distinct art and professed as such), that it is possible to determine the human *intellectual* character as to some of its features from the hand-writing. Books even have been written on this art, as *e. g.* the *Ideographia*, or art of knowing the characters of men from their hand-writings, by *Aldorisius:* and, though this in common with all other modes of *physiognomy*, as craniology, Lavaterianism (usually called physiognomy), &c. &c. has laboured under the reproach of fancifulness,—yet we ought not to attribute this wholly to the groundlessness of the art as a possible art—but to these two causes; partly to the precipitation and imperfect psychology of the professors; who, like the craniologists, have been over-ready to determine the *indicantia* before they had settled according to any tolerable theory the *indicanda;* i. e. have settled what A, what B, what C, shall *indicate*, before they have inquired what it was presumable upon any systematic development of human nature would

have a right *to be indicated;* and thus have assigned an external characteristic to a faculty of the third order—suppose (or perhaps a mere accidental effect of a faculty or a mere imaginary faculty), whilst a primary faculty went without any expression at all: —partly, I say, to this cause which is obviously not merely a subjective but also an accidental cause; and partly also to the following cause, which is objective (*i. e.* seated in the inherent imperfections of the art itself, and not removeable therefore by any future improvements to be anticipated from a more matured psychology); viz. that the human mind transcends or overflows the gamut or scale of the art; in other words, that the qualities—intellectual or moral, which ought to be expressed, are far more in number than the alphabet of signs or expressions by which they are to be enunciated. Hence it follows as an inevitable dilemma, that many qualities must go unrepresented; or else be represented by signs common to them with other qualities: in the first of which cases we have an art imperfect from defect, in the other case imperfect from equivocal language. Thus, for example, determination of character is built in some cases upon mere energy of the will (a moral cause); and again in other cases upon capaciousness of judgment and freedom from all logical perplexity (an intellectual cause). Yet it is possible that either cause will modify the hand-writing in the same way.

From the long analysis which we have thus given of the book recording this new system of education, it is sufficiently evident that we think very highly of it. In the hands of its founder we are convinced that

it is calculated to work wonders; and so strong is the impression which his book conveys, that he is not only a man of very extraordinary talents for the improvement of the science of education, but also a very conscientious man—that, for our own parts, we should confide a child to his care with that spirit of perfect confidence which he has himself described at p. 74. There is an air of gentlemanly feeling spread over the book which tends still further to recommend the author. Meantime two questions arise on the system,—first, is it a good system? which we have answered:—secondly, is it a system adapted for general diffusion? This question we dare not answer in the affirmative, unless we could ensure the talents and energy of the original inventor in every other superintendent of this system.—In this we may be wrong: but at all events, it ought not to be considered as any deduction from the merits of the author—as a very original thinker on the science of education, that his system is not (like the Madras system) independent of the teacher's ability, and therefore not unconditionally applicable.—Upon some future occasion we shall perhaps take an opportunity of stating what is in our opinion the great desideratum which is still to be supplied in the art of education considered simply in its *intellectual* purposes—viz. the communication of knowledge, and the development of the intellectual faculties: purposes which have not been as yet treated in sufficient insulation from the *moral* purposes. For the present we shall conclude by recommending to the notice of the Experimentalist the German writers on education. Basedow, who naturalised Rousseau in Germany, was the first

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CASE OF APPEAL.

...e Courts of Justice not unfrequently ...cases of considerable interest: and we are ... willing to make the resemblance between our ...system and the world at large as close as possible. ...east in every useful point we are trying to collect ... volume of Reports. As all the boys are expected to be present during a trial, to give importance to the proceeding, the time of such as are capable of the task must be profitably employed in taking notes. A useful effect may also be produced upon the parties: and these records will be valuable acquisitions for those boys who wish to study the laws, and enable themselves to conduct the jurisprudence of the school. We shall detail a case which lately occurred, not because it is the most interesting which could have been selected, but because there will be nothing in its publication to hurt the feelings of any person engaged in the transaction.

It would be vain to attempt any concealment of the fact that our pupils, like all boys in the full tide of health and spirits, do not always see the folly of an appeal to the *ultimo ratio regum* in so strong a light as that in which it *sometimes* appears to older eyes; and resort is now and then had to trial by combat, in preference to trial by jury. The candid and experienced teacher, who knows the difficulty and the danger of too rigorously suppressing natural impulses, will not censure us for endeavouring to regulate this custom, than to destroy it altogether. In the hope of lessening the number of those *fracas* (never very large), a law was proposed, which the committee adopted, to render it penal for any person, except the Magistrate and the Constables, to be present at a battle. Six hours' notice must be given by both parties, and a tax paid in advance. During the interval, it is the duty of the Magistrate to attempt a reconciliation. These regulations were intended to give opportunity for the passions to cool, and to check the inclination for display which is often the sole cause of the disturbance.

We consider the effect on the minds of the spectators as the worst part of the transaction. There is something dreadfully brutalising in the shouts of incitement and triumph which generally accompany a feat of pugilism. Neither boys nor men ought ever to witness pain without sympathy. It is almost needless to say, that, with us, fighting is anything rather than a source of festivity and amusement.

To return to our story.—A day-scholar, whose father's grounds adjoin ours, was discovered by the Magistrate to have witnessed a battle from a tree

which he had climbed for that purpose. The Magistrate fined him. He appealed, and the question of his liability was argued at some length before the Committee.

The ground which the appellant took was, that no day-scholar could be amenable to the laws of the school, except during the hours of business, or while on the premises of the school, and that the alleged offence was committed out of school hours, and on his father's land.

Public opinion ran in his favour. The plea that he was on his father's land seemed to have great weight with his schoolfellows. To fine a boy under such circumstances appeared to them like an attempt to invade the paternal sanctuary, and the motion for quashing conviction of the Magistrate, at first received the support of several members of the Committee.

The attending Teacher saw that it would be necessary to call the attention of the Committee to general principles, and proposed as an amendment to the general motion, the following resolution, 'That it is desirable that the laws should be obeyed at all times, and in all places.' In support of this amendment he argued, that as the laws had the happiness of the school in view, a breach of those laws must certainly be in some degree destructive of the general good. That to allow this in certain individuals would be injurious to the great body, but still more so to the individuals themselves; and that what was wrong in the schoolroom or on the playground at eleven in the morning, could not be right in the fields at six in the afternoon. In conclusion he said, 'Whether or not we have the power to fine a person for a breach of

our laws when he is at a distance from the schools, is a question which it is not our present business to determine; but I firmly believe that our laws are calculated to promote in the highest degree our welfare, and I wish the advantages to be derived from obeying them to be as widely diffused as possible.'

The amendment was carried unanimously.

Having determined 'that it was desirable that the laws should be obeyed at all times and in all places,' it was necessary in the next place to ascertain whether it was not a part of our law that such should be the case.

With this view an amendment was proposed which declared, that such was the intention of the law, and in support of it cases were cited in which day-boys had been punished for offences committed at a distance from the school. It was also insisted, that in no single instance had the laws made an exception in favour of the day-boys. They universally begin by saying, that, if 'any one,' or 'any pupil,' or 'any boy,' shall commit such and such an offence, etc., and not 'any boarder,' or 'any day-boy then at school.'

The second amendment was also carried without opposition.

The question was now confined within very narrow limits. The Committee had declared that it was 'desirable that the laws should be obeyed at all times and in all places;' and also, that by law no exception was made in favour of day-scholars. It only remained therefore for the Committee to consider, whether the police of the school had the power to enforce the laws.

It was argued that in this case they had been enforced, for that the fine had actually been paid, and

that unless the Committee interfered to prevent it, they would continue to operate as they had done, for the welfare of the school at large, and for the ultimate advantage even of the individuals who might at first appear to be injured.

The amended motion was now put, and the conviction was unanimously confirmed.

This detail will furnish the reader with a more correct conception than we could otherwise give him, of the opportunities with which the sittings of our little Committees furnish the members for making some important acquirements.

In the first place, they study the art of reasoning, and that too under very favourable circumstances; being fully acquainted with the facts on which they are called to exercise their judgments, and seeing them in all their bearings. We believe that intimate acquaintance with the facts of which we speak to be the first and most important element in practical logic. Reasoning, strictly speaking, being no more than the art of tracing analogies and differences. The *reality* of the business in which the students are engaged is very valuable, inasmuch as it furnishes them with strong motives to exert all their powers in the investigation. The matter at issue 'comes home to their business and bosoms;' it may deeply affect their interests, and will not pass unnoticed by their constituents; among whom the question will be again discussed, and the Committee-men will in conversation have to defend the opinions they have officially expressed. Thus every argument is well canvassed in their minds, and the ideas remain under consideration for a sufficient time to become per-

manently fixed in their remembrance. The power of public speaking is also in some degree acquired, and, we hope, without the countervailing evils which have been so justly deprecated. The great defects of all artificial methods of learning the art of debating is, that it is seldom of any real importance to either speaker or hearer, on which side the question under discussion is determined; consequently, the speaker is more anxious to display his own talents, than to convince the audience; which, on its part, wishes rather for amusement than instruction, or seeks the latter only by watching the conduct of this mental fencing-match, in order to learn the most skilful manner of handling the foils. Every one who addresses the company assembled, feels that he shall be more applauded for agreeably wandering, than for pointing out and following the best and straightest road. In short, discussion, instead of being a means employed to gain an object, is the end itself.

The orator, if such a name is to be so degraded, rises not to gain the votes of his hearers, but to make them laugh and clap their hands; and, this is most easily done by advancing smart sophisms, and uttering well-delivered absurdities with mock solemnity, we may readily conceive how little the powers of investigation can be exercised and improved by such practice as that of spouting clubs and debating societies. No doubt there are many exceptions to these remarks, but the vice we complain of is, we fear, inherent in some degree in the nature of the institutions, although by care in the choice of members, and the selection of an audience, it may, in a great measure, be counteracted.

We must not forget to state the advantages enjoyed by the Teacher's attendance on the sittings of our Committees. He becomes more intimately acquainted with the minds of his pupils. He sees their difficulties and their errors in a strong light, and is placed in a situation for addressing himself more completely to the state of their wants than he could be, unless they were thus induced, and almost compelled, to disclose all the workings of the mental machine. In general, nearly every person who knows a boy at all, has an opportunity of becoming better acquainted with him than his instructor. No wonder, considering the many painful sensations which the latter, in his various offices of accuser, witness, judge and executioner, is compelled to exite. We are happily relieved from these difficulties, but we still seize with avidity every means by which our pupils may be induced to develop their minds to our view, feeling that our acquaintance with their springs of thought and action can never be too accurate and complete. The votes at the conclusion of the debate show us the measure of our success. Every influence except that of mind, is, we trust, out of the question: we do not always carry a majority with us; and this fact gives us hope, that when we do, a sincere effect has been wrought on the convictions of the boys.

To conclude, we must in candour acknowledge, that we search more industriously for arguments and illustrations to support our opinions, than we should or *could* do, under other circumstances. The effect on the mind of the Master is not a bad test of any method of education.

ABSTRACT OF SWEDENBORGIANISM:

By IMMANUEL KANT.

(*May*, 1824.)

———But now to my hero. If many a forgotten writer, or writer destined to be forgotten, is on that account the more deserving of applause for having spared no cost of toil and intellectual exertion upon his works, certainly Swedenborg of all such writers is deserving of the most. Without doubt his flask in the moon is full; and not at all less than any of those which Ariosto saw in that planet filled with the lost wits of men, so thoroughly is his great work emptied of every drop of common sense. Nevertheless there prevails in every part so wonderful an agreement with all that the most refined and consistent sense under the same fantastic delusions could produce on the same subject, that the reader will pardon me if I here detect the same curiosities in the caprices of fancy which many other virtuosi have detected in the caprices of nature; for instance, in variegated marble, where some have discovered a holy family; or in stalactites and petrifactions, where others have discovered monks, baptismal fonts, and organs; or even in frozen window-panes, where our countryman Liscow, the humourist, discovered the number of the

beast and the triple crown; things which he only is apt to descry, whose head is preoccupied with thoughts about them.

The main work of this writer is composed of eight quarto volumes full of nonsense, which he presented to the world as a new revelation under the title of *Arcana Cœlestia*. In this work his visions are chiefly directed to the discovery of the secret sense in the two first books of Moses, and to a similar way of interpreting the whole of the Scripture. All these fantastic interpretations are nothing to my present purpose: those who have any curiosity may find some account of them in the *Bibliotheca Theologica* of Dr. Ernesti. All that I design to extract are his *audita et visa*, from the supplements to his chapters—that which he saw with his own eyes, and heard with his own ears: for these parts of his dreams it is which are to be considered as the foundation of all the rest. Swedenborg's style is dull and mean. His narrations and their whole contexture appear in fact to have originated in a disorder of his sensitive faculty, and suggest no reason for suspecting that the speculative delusions of a depraved intellect have moved him to invent them. Viewed in this light, they are really of some importance—and deserve to be exhibited in a short abstract; much more indeed than many a brainless product of fantastic philosophers who swell our journals with false subtilties; for a coherent delusion of the senses is always a more remarkable phenomenon than a delusion of the intellect; inas much as the grounds of this latter delusion are well known, and the delusion itself corrigible enough by self-exertion and by putting more check upon the

rash precipitation of the judgment; whereas a delusion of the senses touches the original foundation of all judgment, and where it exists is radically incapable of all cure from logic. I distinguish therefore in our author his craziness of sense from his crazy wits; and I pass over his absurd and distorted reasonings in those parts where he abandons his visions, for the same reason that in reading a philosopher we are often obliged to separate his obvervations from his arguments: and generally, delusive experiences are more instructive than delusive grounds of experience in the reason. Whilst I thus rob the reader of some few moments, which otherwise perhaps he would have spent with no greater profit in reading works of abstract philosophy that are often of not less trivial import,—I have at the same time provided for the delicacy of his taste by the omission of many chimæras, and by concentrating the essence of the book into a few drops; and for this I anticipate no less gratitude from him than (according to the old story) a patient expressed towards his physicians—who had contented themselves with ordering him to eat the bark of the quinquina, when it was clearly in their power to have insisted on his eating up the whole tree.

Mr. Swedenborg divides his visions into three kinds, of which the first consists in being liberated from the body—an intermediate state between waking and sleeping, in which he saw—heard—and felt spirits. This kind he has experienced three or four times. The second consists in being carried away by spirits, whilst he continues to walk the streets (suppose) without losing his way; meantime in spirit he is in

quite other regions, and sees distinctly houses, men, forests, &c.; and all this for some hours long, until he suddenly finds himself again in his true place. This has happened to him two or three times. The third or ordinary kind of visions is that which he has daily when wide awake; and from this class his narrations are chiefly taken. All men, according to Swedenborg, stand in an intimate connection with the spiritual world; only they are not aware of it; and the difference between himself and others consists simply in this—that his innermost nature is laid open, of which gift he always speaks with the most devout spirit of gratitude (Datum mihi est ex divinâ Domini misericordiâ). From the context it is apparent that this gift consists in the consciousness of those obscure representations which the soul receives through its continual connection with the spiritual world. Accordingly he distinguishes in men between the external and the internal memory. The former he enjoys as a person who belongs to the visible world, but the latter in virtue of his intercourse with the spiritual world. Upon this distinction is grounded also the distinction between the outer and inner man; and Swedenborg's prerogative consists in this—that he stands already in this life in the society of spirits, and is recognised by them as possessing such a prerogative. In the inner memory is retained whatsoever has vanished from the outer; and of all which is presented to the consciousness of man nothing is ever lost. After death the remembrance of all which ever entered his soul, and even all that had perished to himself, constitutes the entire book of his life. The presence of spirits, it is true, strikes only upon his

inner sense. Nevertheless this is able to excite an apparition of these spirits external to himself, and even to invest them with a human figure. The language of spirits is an *immediate* and unsymbolic communication of ideas; notwithstanding which it is always clothed in the semblance of that language which Swedenborg himself speaks, and is represented as external to him. One spirit reads in the memory of another spirit all the representations, whether images or ideas, which it contains. Thus the spirits see in Swedenborg all the representations which he has of this world; and with so clear an intuition that they often deceive themselves and fancy that they see the objects themselves immediately—which however is impossible, since no pure spirit has the slightest perception of the material universe: nay they cannot gain any idea of it through intercourse with the souls of other living men, because their inner nature is not opened—*i. e.* their inner sense contains none but obscure representations. Hence it arises that Mr. Swedenborg is the true oracle of spirits, which are not at all less curious to read in him the present condition of the world, than he is to view in their memory, as in a mirror, the marvels of the spiritual world. Although these spirits stand in like manner closely connected with all other souls of living men, by a reciprocal commerce of action and passion, yet they are as little aware of this as men are aware of it. Spirits therefore ascribe to themselves as the product of their own minds what in fact results from the action of human souls upon them; just as men during their lives imagine that all their thoughts, and the motions of the will which take place within

them, arise from themselves, although in fact they oftentimes take their origin in the spiritual world. Meantime every human soul, even in this life, has its place and station in this spiritual world, and belongs to a certain society which is always adapted to its inner condition of truth and goodness,—that is, to the condition of the understanding and the will. But the places of souls in relation to each other have nothing in common with the material world; and therefore the soul of a man in India is often in respect to spiritual situation next neighbour to the soul of another man in Europe; as on the contrary very often those, who dwell corporeally under the same roof, are with respect to their spiritual relations far enough asunder. If a man dies, his soul does not on that account change its place; but simply feels itself in that place which in regard to other spirits it already held in this life. For the rest, although the relation of spirits to each other is no true relation of space, yet has it to them the appearance of space; and their affinities or attractions for each other assume the semblance of proximities, as their repulsions do of distances; just as spirits themselves are not actually extended, but yet present the appearance to each other of a human figure. In this imaginary space there is an undisturbed intercourse of spiritual natures. Mr. Swedenborg converses with departed souls whenever he chooses, and reads in their memory (he means to say in their representative faculty) that very condition in which they contemplate themselves; and this he sees as clearly as with his bodily eyes. Moreover the enormous distance of the rational inhabitants of the world is to be accounted as nothing

in relation to the spiritual universe; and to talk with an inhabitant of Saturn is just as easy to him as to speak with a departed human soul. All depends upon the relation of their inner condition in reference to their agreement in truth and goodness: but those spirits, which have weak affinities for each other, can readily come into intercourse through the inter-agency of others. On this account it is not necessary that a man should actually have dwelt on all the other heavenly bodies in order to know them together with all their wonders.

One presiding doctrine in Swedenborg's ravings is this: corporeal beings have no subsistence of their own, but exist merely by and through the spiritual world; although each body not by means of one spirit alone, but of all taken together. Hence the knowledge of material things has two meanings; an external meaning referring to the inter-dependencies of the matter upon itself, and an internal meaning in so far as they denote the powers of the spiritual world which are their causes. Thus the body of man has a system of parts related to each other agreeably to material laws: but, in so far as it is supported by the spirit which lives, its limbs and their functions have a symbolic value as expressions of those faculties in the soul from which they derive their form, mode of activity, and power of enduring. The same law holds with regard to all other things in the visible universe: they have (as has been said) one meaning as things—which is trivial, and another as signs—which is far weightier. Hence by the way arises the source of those new interpretations of Scripture which Swedenborg has introduced. For the inner sense,—

that is, the symbolic relation of all things there recorded to the spiritual world,—is, as he conceits, the kernel of its value; all the rest being only its shell. All spirits represent themselves to one another under the appearance of extended forms; and the influences of all these spiritual beings amongst one another raise to them at the same time appearances of other extended beings, and as it were of a material world. Swedenborg therefore speaks of gardens—spacious regions—mansions—galleries—and arcades of spirits—as of things seen by himself in the clearest light; and he assures us—that, having many times conversed with all his friends after their death, he had almost always found in those who had but lately died—that they could scarcely convince themselves that they had died, because they saw round about them a world similar to the one they had quitted. He found also that spiritual societies, which had the same inner condition, had the same apparition of space and of all things in space; and that the change of their internal state was always accompanied by the appearance of a change of place.

I have already noticed that, according to our author, the various powers and properties of the soul stand in sympathy with the organs of the body entrusted to its government. The outer man therefore corresponds to the whole inner man; and hence, whenever any remarkable spiritual influence from the invisible world reaches one of these faculties of the soul, he is sensible also harmonically of the apparent presence of it in the corresponding members of his outer man. To this head now he refers a vast variety of sensations in his body which are uniformly con-

nected with spiritual intuition; but the absurdity of them is so enormous that I shall not attempt to adduce even a single instance.——By all this a preparation is made for the strangest and most fantastic of his notions in which all his ravings are blended. As different powers and faculties constitute that unity which is the soul or inner man, so also different spirits (whose leading characteristics bear the same relation to each other as the various faculties of a spirit) constitute one society which exhibits the appearance of one great man; and in this shadowy image every spirit is seen in that place and in those visible members which are agreeable to its proper function in such a spiritual body. And all spiritual societies taken together, and the entire universe of all these invisible beings, appears again in the form of a hugest and ultra-enormous man mountain: a monstrous and gigantic fancy, which perhaps has grown out of the school mode of representing a whole quarter of the world under the image of a virgin sitting. In this immeasurable man is an entire and inner commerce of each spirit with all, and of all with each; and, let the position of men in reference to each other be what it may, they take quite another position in this enormous man—a position which they never change, and which is only in appearance a local position in an immeasurable space, but in fact a determinate kind of relation and influence.

But I am weary of transcribing the delirious ravings of a poor visionary, the craziest that has ever existed, or of pursuing them to his descriptions of the state after death. I am checked also by other considerations. For, although in forming a medical

museum it is right to collect specimens not only of natural but also of unnatural productions and abortions, yet it is necessary to be cautious before whom you show them: and amongst my readers there may happen to be some in a crazy condition of nerves; and it would give me pain to think that I had been the occasion of any mischief to them. Having warned them however from the beginning, I am not responsible for anything that may happen; and must desire that no person will lay at my door the moon-calves which may chance to arise from any teeming fancy impregnated by Mr. Swedenborg's revelations.

In conclusion I have to say that I have not interpolated my author's dreams with any surreptitious ones of my own; but have laid a faithful abstract before the economic reader, who might not be well pleased to pay seven pounds sterling for a body of raving. I have indeed omitted many circumstantial pictures of his intuitions, because they could only have served to disturb the reader's slumber; and the confused sense of his revelations I have now and then clothed in a more current diction. But all the important features of the sketch I have preserved in their native integrity.——And thus I return with some little shame from my foolish labours, from which I shall draw this moral: That it is often a very easy thing to act prudentially; but alas! too often only after we have toiled to our prudence through a forest of delusions.

SKETCH OF PROFESSOR WILSON.*

[*In a Letter to an American Gentleman.*]

MY DEAR L.,—Among the *lions* whom you missed by one accident or another on your late travels in Europe, I observe that you recur to none with so much regret as Professor Wilson; you dwell upon this one disappointment as a personal misfortune; and perhaps with reason; for, in the course of my life, I have met with no man of equally varied accomplishments, or, upon the whole, so well entitled to be ranked with that order of men distinguished by brilliant versatility and ambidexterity—of which order we find such eminent models in Alcibiades, in Cæsar, in Crichton, in that of Servan recorded by Sully, and in one or two Italians. Pity that you had not earlier communi-

* This was written for *The Edinburgh Literary Gazette*, of which sixty-one numbers appear to have been issued in 1829-30. The paper is now so scarce, that the American publishers of DE QUINCEY's works photographed their 'copy' from that contained in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh. There is a file in the British Museum. I have not been able to authenticate any other contribution from the pen of DE QUINCEY. This letter deserves attention in various ways, but particularly for the passage on Elleray—CHRISTOPHER NORTH's home on the banks of Windermere. MRS. GORDON in the life of her Father, PROFESSOR WILSON, remarks:—'For a description of this beautiful spot I gladly avail myself of the striking picture by Mr. DE QUINCEY.'—H.

cated to me the exact route you were bound to, and the particular succession of your engagements when you visited the English Lakes; since, in that case, my interest with Professor Wilson (supposing always that you had declined to rely upon the better passport of your own merits as a naturalist) would have availed for a greater thing than at that time stood between you and the introduction which you coveted. On the day, or the night rather, when you were at Bowness and Ambleside, I happen to know that Professor Wilson's business was one which might have been executed by proxy, though it could not be delayed; and I also know that, apart from the *general* courtesy of his nature, he would, at all times, have an especial pleasure in waiving a claim of business for one of science or letters, in the person of a foreigner coming from a great distance; and that in no other instance would he make such a sacrifice so cordially as on behalf of an able naturalist. Perhaps you already know from your countryman, Audubon, that the Professor is himself a naturalist, and of original merit; in fact, worth a score of such meagre bookish naturalists as are formed in museums and by second-hand acts of memory; having (like Audubon) built much of his knowledge upon personal observation. Hence he has two great advantages: one, that his knowledge is accurate in a very unusual degree; and another, that this knowledge, having grown up under the inspiration of a real interest and an unaffected love for its objects,—commencing, indeed, at an age when no affectation in matters of that nature could exist,—has settled upon those facts and circumstances which have a true philosophical value: habits,

predominant affections, the direction of instincts, and the compensatory processes where these happen to be thwarted,—on all such topics he is learned and full; whilst, on the science of measurements and proportions, applied to dorsal-fins and tail-feathers, and on the exact arrangement of colours, &c.—that petty upholstery of nature, on which books are so tedious and elaborate,—not uncommonly he is negligent or forgetful. What may have served in later years to quicken and stimulate his knowledge in this field, and, at any rate, greatly to extend it, is the conversation of his youngest brother, Mr. James Wilson, who (as *you* know much better than I) is a naturalist *majorum gentium*. He, indeed, whilst a boy of not more than sixteen or seventeen, was in correspondence (I believe) with Montague the Ornithologist; and about the same time had skill enough to pick holes in the coat of Mr. Hüber, the German reformer of our then erroneous science of bees.

You see, therefore, that no possible introduction could have stood you more in stead than your own extensive knowledge of transatlantic ornithology. Swammerdam passed his life, it is said, in a ditch. *That* was a base, earthy solitude,—and a prison. But you and Audubon have passed *your* lives in the heavenly solitudes of forests and savannahs; and such solitude as this is no prison, but infinite liberty. The knowledge which you have gathered has been answerable to the character of your school: and no sort of knowledge could have secured you a better welcome with Professor Wilson. Yet, had it been otherwise, I repeat that my interest (as I flatter myself) would have opened the gates of Elleray to

you even at midnight; for I am so old a friend of Mr. Wilson that I take a pride in supposing myself the oldest; and, barring relations by blood, arrogate the rights of dean in the chapter of his associates: or at least I know of but one person whose title can probably date earlier than mine. About this very month when I am writing, I have known Professor Wilson for a cycle of twenty years and more, which is just half of his life—and also half of mine; for we are almost *ad apicem* of the same age; Wilson being born in May, and I in August, of the same memorable year.

My introduction to him—setting apart the introducee himself—was memorable from one sole circumstance, viz. the person of the introducer. *William Wordsworth* it was, who in the vale of Grasmere, if it can interest you to know the place, and in the latter end of 1808, if you can be supposed to care about the time, did me the favour of making me known to John Wilson, or as I might say (upon the Scottish fashion of designating men from their territorial pretensions) to Elleray. I remember the whole scene as circumstantially as if it belonged to but yesterday. In the vale of Grasmere,—that peerless little vale which you and Gray the poet and so many others have joined in admiring as the very Eden of English beauty, peace, and pastoral solitude,—you may possibly recall, even from that flying glimpse you had of it, a modern house called Allan Bank, standing under a low screen of woody rocks which descend from the hill of Silver How, on the western side of the lake. This house had been then recently built by a worthy merchant of Liverpool; but for some reason of no importance to

you and me, not being immediately wanted for the family of the owner, had been let for a term of three years to Mr. Wordsworth. At the time I speak of, both Mr. Coleridge and myself were on a visit to Mr. Wordsworth; and one room on the ground floor, designed for a breakfasting-room, which commands a sublime view of the three mountains,—Fairfield, Arthur's Chair, and Seat Sandal (the first of them within about four hundred feet of the highest mountains in Great Britain), was then occupied by Mr. Coleridge as a study. On this particular day, the sun having only just set, it naturally happened that Mr. Coleridge—whose nightly vigils were long—had not yet come down to breakfast: meantime, and until the epoch of the Coleridgian breakfast should arrive, his study was lawfully disposable to profaner uses. Here, therefore, it was, that, opening the door hastily in quest of a book, I found seated, and in earnest conversation, two gentlemen—one of them my host, Mr. Wordsworth, at that time about thirty-seven or thirty-eight years old; the other was a younger man by good sixteen or seventeen years, in a sailor's dress, manifestly in robust health—*fervidus juventâ*, and wearing upon his countenance a powerful expression of ardour and animated intelligence, mixed with much good nature. '*Mr. Wilson of Elleray*'—delivered, as the formula of introduction, in the deep tones of Mr. Wordsworth—at once banished the momentary surprise I felt on finding an unknown stranger where I had expected nobody, and substituted a surprise of another kind: I now well understood who it was that I saw; and there was no wonder in his being at Allan Bank, Elleray standing within nine miles; but

(as usually happens in such cases) I felt a shock of surprise on seeing a person so little corresponding to the one I had half unconsciously prefigured.

And here comes the place naturally, if anywhere, for a description of Mr. Wilson's person and general appearance in carriage, manner, and deportment; and a word or two I shall certainly say on these points, simply because I know that I *must*, else my American friends will complain that I have left out that precise section in my whole account which it is most impossible for them to supply for themselves by any acquaintance with his printed works. Yet suffer me, before I comply with this demand, to enter one word of private protest against the childish (nay, worse than childish—the *missy*) spirit in which such demands originate. From my very earliest years,—that is the earliest years in which I had any sense of what belongs to true dignity of mind,—I declare to you that I have considered the interest which men, grown men, take in the personal appearance of each other as one of the meanest aspects under which human curiosity commonly presents itself. Certainly I have the same intellectual perception of differences in such things that other men have; but I connect none of the feelings, whether of admiration or contempt, liking or disliking, which are obviously connected with these perceptions by human beings generally. Such words as 'commanding appearance,' 'prepossessing countenance,' applied to the figures or faces of the males of the human species, have no meaning in my ears: no man commands me, no man prepossesses me, by anything in, on, or about his carcass. What care I for any man's legs? I laugh

at his ridiculous presumption in conceiting that I shall trouble myself to admire or to respect anything that he can produce in his *physics*. What! shall I honour Milo for the very qualities which he has in common with the beastly ox he carries—his thews and sinews, his ponderous strength and weight, and the quantity of thumping that his hide will carry? I disclaim and disdain any participation in such green-girl feelings. I admit that the baby feelings I am here condemning are found in connection with the highest intellects: in particular, Mr. Coleridge for instance once said to me, as a justifying reason for his dislike of a certain celebrated Scotsman, with an air of infinite disgust, —'that ugh!' (making a guttural sound as if of execration) 'he (viz. the said Scotsman) was so chicken-breasted.' I have been assured by the way, that Mr. Coleridge was mistaken in the mere matter of fact: but supposing that he were not, what a reason for a philosopher to build a disgust upon! And Mr. Wordsworth, in or about the year 1820, in expressing the extremity of his *Nil admirari* spirit, declared that he would not go ten yards out of his road to see the finest specimen of man (intellectually speaking) that Europe had to show: and so far indeed I do not quarrel with his opinion; but Mr. Wordsworth went on to say that this indifference did *not* extend itself to man considered physically; and that he would still exert himself to a small extent (suppose a mile or so) for the sake of seeing Belzoni. *That* was the case he instanced: and, as I understood him, not by way of a general illustration for his meaning, but that he really felt an exclusive interest in this particular man's *physics*. Now Belzoni was certainly a good

tumbler, as I have heard; and hopped well upon one leg, when surmounted and crested by a pyramid of men and boys; and jumped capitally through a hoop; and did all sorts of tricks in all sorts of styles, not at all worse than any monkey, bear, or learned pig, that ever exhibited in Great Britain. And I would myself have given a shilling to have seen him fight with that cursed Turk that assaulted him in the streets of Cairo; and would have given him a crown for catching the circumcised dog by the throat and effectually taking the conceit out of his Mahometan carcass: but then *that* would have been for the spectacle of the passions, which, in such a case, would have been let loose: as to the mere animal Belzoni,—who after all was not to be compared to Topham the Warwickshire man, that drew back by main force a cart, and its driver, and a strong horse,—as to the mere animal Belzoni, I say, and his bull neck, I would have much preferred to see a real bull or the Darlington ox. The sum of the matter is this: all men, even those who are most manly in their style of thinking and feeling, in many things retain the childishness of their childish years: no man thoroughly weeds himself of all. And this particular mode of childishness is one of the commonest, into which they fall the more readily from the force of sympathy, and because they apprehend no reason for directing any vigilance against it. But I contend that reasonably no feelings of deep interest are justifiable as applied to any point of external form or feature in human beings, unless under two reservations: first, that they shall have reference to women; because women, being lawfully the objects of passions and tender affections, which can

have no existence as applied to men, are objects also, rationally and consistently, of all other secondary feelings (such as those derived from their personal appearance) which have any tendency to promote and support the first. Whereas between men the highest mode of intercourse is merely intellectual, which is not of a nature to receive support or strength from any feelings of pleasure or disgust connected with the accidents of external appearance: but exactly in the degree in which these have any influence at all they must warp and disturb by improper biases; and the single case of exception, where such feelings can be honourable and laudable amongst the males of the human species, is where they regard such deformities as are the known products and expressions of criminal or degrading propensities. All beyond this, I care not by whom countenanced, is infirmity of mind, and would be baseness if it were not excused by imbecility.

Excuse this digression, for which I have a double reason: chiefly I was anxious to put on record my own opinions, and my contempt for men generally in this particular; and here I seemed to have a conspicuous situation for that purpose. Secondly, apart from this purpose of offence, I was at any rate anxious, merely on a defensive principle, to screen myself from the obvious misinterpretation incident to the case: saying anything minute or in detail upon a man's person, I should necessarily be supposed to do so under the ordinary blind feelings of interest in that subject which govern most people; feelings which I disdain. Now, having said all this, and made my formal protest, *liberavi animam meam;* and I revert to my subject, and shall say that word or

two which I was obliged to promise you on Professor Wilson's personal appearance.

Figure to yourself, then, a tall man, about six feet high, within half an inch or so, built with tolerable appearance of strength; but at the date of my description (that is, in the very spring-tide and blossom of youth) wearing, for the predominant character of his person, lightness and agility, or (in our Westmoreland phrase), *lishness:* he seemed framed with an express view to gymnastic exercises of every sort—

"Αλμα, ποδωκείην, ἴσκιον, ἄκοντα, πάλην·

In the first of these exercises, indeed, and possibly (but of that I am not equally certain) in the second, I afterwards came to know that he was absolutely unrivalled: and the best leapers at that time in the ring, Richmond the Black and others, on getting 'a taste of his quality,' under circumstances of considerable disadvantage [viz. after a walk from Oxford to Moulsey Hurst, which I believe is fifty miles], declined to undertake him. For this exercise he had two remarkable advantages: it is recorded of Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham, that, though otherwise a handsome man, he offended the connoisseurs in statuesque proportions by one eminent defect—perhaps the most obtrusive to which the human figure is liable—viz. a body of length disproportioned to his legs. In Mr. Wilson the proportions were fortunately reversed: a short trunk, and remarkably long legs, gave him one half of his advantages in the noble science of leaping; the other half was afterwards pointed out to me by an accurate critic in these matters as lying in the particular conformation of

his foot, the instep of which is arched, and the back of the heel strengthened in so remarkable a way that it would be worth paying a penny or so for a sight of them. It is really laughable to think of the coxcombry which eminent men of letters have displayed in connection with their powers—real or fancied—in this art. Cardinal du Perron vapoured to the end of his life upon some remarkable leap that he either *had* accomplished, or conceived himself to have accomplished (not, I presume, in red stockings). Every tenth page of the *Perroniana* rings with the echo of this stupendous leap—the length of which, if I remember rightly, is as obviously fabulous as any feat of Don Belianis of Greece. Des Cartes also had a lurking conceit that, in some unknown place, he had perpetrated a leap that ought to immortalise him; and in one of his letters he repeats and accredits a story of some obscure person's leap, which

'At one light bound high overleaped all bound'

of reasonable credulity. Many other eminent leapers might be cited, Pagan and Christian: but the Cardinal, by his own account, appears to have been the flower of Popish leapers; and, with all deference to his Eminence, upon a better assurance than that, Professor Wilson may be rated, at the time I speak of, as the flower of all Protestant leapers. Not having the Cardinal's foible of connecting any vanity with this little accomplishment, knowing exactly what could and what could *not* be effected in this department of gymnastics, and speaking with the utmost simplicity and candour of his failures and his successes alike, he might always be relied upon, and his

statements were constantly in harmony with any collateral testimony that chance happened to turn up.

Viewed, therefore, by an eye learned in gymnastic proportions, Mr. Wilson presented a somewhat striking figure: and by some people he was pronounced with emphasis a fine looking young man; but others, who less understood, or less valued these advantages, spoke of him as nothing extraordinary. Still greater division of voices I have heard on his pretensions to be thought handsome. In my opinion, and most certainly in his own, these pretensions were but slender. His complexion was too florid; hair of a hue quite unsuited to that complexion; eyes not good, having no apparent depth, but seeming mere surfaces; and in fine, no one feature that could be called fine, except the lower region of his face, mouth, chin, and the parts adjacent, which were then (and perhaps are now) truly elegant and Ciceronian. Ask in one of your public libraries for that little 4to edition of the *Rhetorical Works of Cicero*, edited by Schütz (the same who edited *Æschylus*), and you will there see (as a frontispiece to the 1st vol.) a reduced whole length of Cicero from the antique; which in the mouth and chin, and indeed generally, if I do not greatly forget, will give you a lively representation of the contour and expression of Professor Wilson's face. Taken as a whole, though not handsome (as I have already said), when viewed in a quiescent state, the head and countenance are massy, dignified, and expressive of tranquil sagacity.

Thus far of Professor Wilson in his outward man, whom (to gratify you and yours, and upon the consideration that my letter is to cross the Atlantic), I

have described with an effort and a circumstantiation that are truly terrific to look back upon. And now, returning to the course of my narrative, such in personal appearance was the young man upon whom my eyes suddenly rested, for the first time, upwards of twenty years ago, in the study of S. T. Coleridge—looking, as I said before, light as a Mercury to eyes familiar with the British build; but, with reference to the lengthy model of you Yankees, who spindle up so tall and narrow, already rather bulky and columnar. Note, however, that of all this array of personal features, as I have here described them, I then saw nothing at all, my attention being altogether occupied with Mr. Wilson's conversation and demeanour, which were in the highest degree agreeable: the points which chiefly struck me being the humility and gravity with which he spoke of himself, his large expansion of heart, and a certain air of noble frankness which overspread everything he said; he seemed to have an intense enjoyment of life; indeed, being young, rich, healthy, and full of intellectual activity, it could not be very wonderful that he should feel happy and pleased with himself and others; but it was somewhat unusual to find that so rare an assemblage of endowments had communicated no tinge of arrogance to his manner, or at all disturbed the general temperance of his mind.

Turn we now suddenly, and without preparation,—simply by way of illustrating the versatile humour of the man,—from this grave and (as in reality it was) philosophic scene, to another first introduction, under most different circumstances, to the same Mr. Wilson. Represent to yourself the earliest dawn of a fine

summer morning, time about half-past two o'clock. A young man, anxious for an introduction to Mr. Wilson, and as yet pretty nearly a stranger to the country, has taken up his abode in Grasmere, and has strolled out at this early hour to that rocky and moorish common (called the White Moss) which overhangs the Vale of Rydal, dividing it from Grasmere. Looking southwards in the direction of Rydal, suddenly he becomes aware of a huge beast advancing at a long trot with the heavy and thundering tread of a hippopotamus along the public road. The creature is soon arrived within half a mile of his station; and by the gray light of morning is at length made out to be a bull apparently flying from some unseen enemy in his rear. As yet, however, all is mystery; but suddenly three horsemen double a turn in the road, and come flying into sight with the speed of a hurricane, manifestly in pursuit of the fugitive bull; the bull labours to navigate his huge bulk to the moor, which he reaches, and then pauses, panting and blowing out clouds of smoke from his nostrils, to look back from his station amongst rocks and slippery crags upon his hunters. If he had conceited that the rockiness of the ground had secured his repose, the foolish bull is soon undeceived; the horsemen, scarcely relaxing their speed, charge up the hill, and speedily gaining the rear of the bull, drive him at a gallop over the worst part of that impracticable ground down into the level ground below. At this point of time the stranger perceives by the increasing light of the morning that the hunters are armed with immense spears fourteen feet long. With these the bull is soon dislodged, and scouring down to the plain below,

he and the hunters at his tail take to the common at the head of the lake, and all, in the madness of the chase, are soon half engulfed in the swamps of the morass. After plunging together for ten or fifteen minutes, all suddenly regain the *terra firma*, and the bull again makes for the rocks. Up to this moment there had been the silence of ghosts; and the stranger had doubted whether the spectacle were not a pageant of aërial spectres, ghostly huntsmen, ghostly lances, and a ghostly bull. But just at this crisis—a voice (it was the voice of Mr. Wilson) shouted aloud, 'Turn the villain; turn that villain; or he will take to Cumberland.' The young stranger did the service required of him; the villain was turned and fled southwards; the hunters, lance in rest, rushed after him; all bowed their thanks as they fled past him; the fleet cavalcade again took the high road; they doubled the cape which shut them out of sight; and in a moment all had disappeared and left the quiet valley to its original silence, whilst the young stranger and two grave Westmoreland statesmen (who by this time had come into sight upon some accident or other) stood wondering in silence, and saying to themselves, perhaps,—

> 'The earth hath bubbles as the water hath;
> And these are of them!'

But they were no bubbles; the bull was a substantial bull; and took no harm at all from being turned out occasionally at midnight for a chase of fifteen or eighteen miles. The bull, no doubt, used to wonder at this nightly visitation; and the owner of the bull must sometimes have pondered a little on

the draggled state in which the swamps would now and then leave his beast; but no other harm came of it. And so it happened, and in the very hurly burly of such an unheard-of chase, that my friend was fortunate enough, by a little service, to recommend himself to the notice of Mr. Wilson; and so passed the scene of his *first introduction.*

In reading the anecdote of the bull hunt, you must bear in mind the period of Mr. Wilson's life to which it belongs, else I should here be unintentionally adding one more to the thousand misrepresentations of his character, which are already extant in different repositories of scandal: most of which I presume, unless in the rarer cases where they have been the pure creations of malice, owe their origin to a little exaggeration, and a great deal of confusion in dates. Levities and extravagances, which find a ready excuse at twenty, ten or fifteen years later are fatal to a man's character for good sense. In such a case, therefore, to be careless or inaccurate in dates, is a moral dishonesty. Understand then that the bull-hunting scenes belong to the time which immediately succeeded my first knowledge of Mr. Wilson. This particular frolic happened to fall within the earliest period of my own personal acquaintance with him. Else, and with this one exception, the era of his wildest (and according to the common estimate, of his insane) extravagances was already past. All those stories, therefore, which you question me about with so much curiosity, of his having joined a company of strolling players, and himself taken the leading parts both in Tragedy and Comedy—of his having assumed

the garb of a Gipsy, and settled for some time in a Gipsy encampment, out of admiration for a young Egyptian beauty; with fifty others of the same class, belong undoubtedly (as many of them as are not wholly fabulous), to the four years immediately preceding the time at which my personal knowledge of Mr. Wilson commenced.

From the latter end of 1803 to the spring of 1808, Mr. Wilson had studied at the University of Oxford; and it was within that period that most of his *escapades* were crowded. He had previously studied as a mere boy, according to the Scotch fashion, at the University of Glasgow, chiefly under the tuition of the late Mr. Jardine (the Professor, I believe, of Logic), and Dr. or Mr. Young (the Professor of Greek). At both Universities he had greatly distinguished himself; but at Oxford, where the distribution of prizes and honours of every kind is to the last degree parsimonious and select, naturally it follows that such academical distinctions are really *significant* distinctions, and proclaim an unequivocal merit in him who has carried them off from a crowd of 1600 or 2000 co-rivals, to whom the contest was open; whereas, in the Scotch Universities, as I am told by Scotchmen, the multiplication of prizes and medals, and the almost indiscriminate profusion with which they are showered abroad, neutralises their whole effect and value. At least this was the case in Mr. Wilson's time; but lately some conspicuous changes have been introduced by a Royal Commission (not yet, I believe, dissolved) into one at least of the Scotch Universities, which have greatly improved it in this respect, by bringing it much nearer to the

English model. When Mr. Wilson gained a prize of fifty guineas for fifty lines of English verse, without further inquiry it becomes evident, from the mere rarity of the distinction which, for a university *now* nearly of five thousand members, occurs but once a year, and from the great over-proportion of that peculiar class (the Undergraduates) to whom the contest is open,—that such a victory was an indisputable criterion of very conspicuous merit. In fact, never in any place did Mr. Wilson play off his Proteus variety of character and talent with so much brilliant effect as at Oxford. In this great University, the most ancient, and by many degrees the most magnificent in the world, he found a stage for display, perfectly congenial with the native elevation of his own character. Perhaps you are not fully aware of the characteristic differences which separate our two English Universities of Oxford and Cambridge from those of Scotland and the Continent: for I have always observed that the best informed foreigners, even after a week's personal acquaintance with the Oxford system, still adhere to the inveterate preconceptions which they had brought with them from the Continent. For instance, they continue obstinately to speak of the *Professors* as the persons to whom the students are indebted for tuition; whereas the majority of these hold their offices as the most absolute sinecures, and the task of tuition devolves upon the tutors appointed in each particular college. These tutors are called public tutors; meaning that they do not confine their instructions to any one individual; but distribute them amongst all the Undergraduates of the college to which they belong; and, in addition to these,

private tutors are allowed to any student who chooses to increase his expenditure in that particular. But the main distinction, which applies to our immediate subject, is the more than regal provision for the lodging and accommodation of the students by the system of *Colleges*. Of these there are in Oxford, neglecting the technical subdivision of *Halls*, five-and-twenty; and the main use of all, both colleges and halls, is, not as in Scotland and on the Continent, to lodge the head of the University with suitable dignity, and to provide rooms for the library and public business of the University. These purposes are met by a separate provision, distinct from the colleges; and the colleges are applied as follows: 1st, and mainly to the reception of the Fellows, and of the Undergraduate Students; 2ndly, to the accommodation of the head (known in different colleges by the several designations of provost, principal, dean, rector, warden, &c.); 3rdly to the accommodation of the private library attached to that college, and to the chapel, which is used at least twice every day for public prayers; 4thly, to the Hall, and the whole establishment of kitchen, wine vaults, buttery, &c., &c., which may be supposed necessary for the liberal accommodation, at the public meals of dinner [and in some colleges supper] of gentlemen and visitors from the country, or from the Continent; varying (we will suppose) from 25 to 500 heads. Everywhere else the great mass of the students are lodged in obscure nooks and corners, which may or may not be respectable, but are at all events withdrawn from the *surveillance* of the University. I shall state both the ground and the effect (or tendency rather) of this difference. Out

of England, universities are not meant exclusively for professional men; the sons of great landholders, and a large proportion of the sons of noblemen, either go through the same academic course as others—or a shorter course adapted to their particular circumstances. In England, again, the church is supplied from the rank of gentry—not exclusively, it is true, but in a much larger proportion than anywhere else, except in Ireland. The corresponding ranks in Scotland, from their old connection with France, have adopted (I believe) much more of the Continental plan for disposing of their sons at this period. At any rate, it will not be contended by any man, that Scotland throws anything like the same proportion with England, of her gentry and her peerage into her universities. Hence, a higher standard of manners and of habits presides at Oxford and Cambridge; and, consequently, a demand for much higher accommodations would even *otherwise* have arisen, had not such a demand already been supplied by the munificence of our English princes and peers, both male and female; and, in one instance at least, of a *Scottish* Prince (Baliol). The extent of these vast Caravanseras enables the governors of the various colleges to furnish every student with a set of two rooms at the least, often with a *suite* of three—[I, who lived at Oxford on no more than my school allowance, had that number]—or in many cases with far more. In the superior colleges, indeed (superior, I mean, as to their purse and landed endowments), all these accommodations keep pace with the refinements of the age; and thus a connection is maintained between the University and the landed *Noblesse*—upper and lower

—of England, which must be reciprocally beneficial, and which, under other circumstances, could scarcely have taken place.

Of these advantages, you may be sure, that Mr. Wilson availed himself to the utmost extent. Instead of going to *Baliol* College, he entered himself at *Magdalen*, in the class of what are called, 'Gentlemen Commoners.' All of us (you know) in Oxford and Cambridge wear an Academic dress, which tells at once our Academic rank with all its modifications. And the term '*Gentlemen Commoner*' implies that he has more splendid costumes, and more in number; that he is expected to spend a good deal more money, that he enjoys a few trifling immunities; and that he has, in particular instances, something like a King's right of pre-emption, as in the choice of rooms, &c.

Once launched in this orbit, Mr. Wilson continued to blaze away for the four successive years, 1804, 1805, 1806, 1807, I believe without any intermission. Possibly I myself was the one sole gownsman who had not then found my attention fixed by his most heterogeneous reputation. In a similar case, Cicero tells a man that ignorance so unaccountable of another man's pretensions argued himself to be a *homo ignorabilis;* or, in the language of the Miltonic Satan, 'Not to know me, argues thyself unknown.' And *that* is true; a *homo ignorabilis* most certainly I was. And even with that admission it is still difficult to account for the extent and the duration of my ignorance. The fact is, that the case well expresses *both* our positions; that *he* should be so conspicuous as to challenge knowledge from the most sequestered of anchorites expresses *his* life; that I should have right

to absolute ignorance of him who was familiar as daylight to all the rest of Oxford—expresses *mine*. Never indeed before, to judge from what I have since heard upon inquiry, did a man, by variety of talents and variety of humours, contrive to place himself as the connecting link between orders of men so essentially repulsive of each other—as Mr. Wilson in this instance.

'Omnis Aristippum decuit color et status, et res.'

From the learned president of his college, Dr. Routh, the editor of parts of *Plato*, and of some *Theological Selections*, with whom Wilson enjoyed an unlimited favour—from this learned Academic Doctor, and many others of the same class, Wilson had an infinite gamut of friends and associates, running through every key; and the diapason closing full in groom, cobbler, stable-boy, barber's apprentice, with every shade and hue of blackguard and ruffian. In particular, amongst this latter kind of worshipful society, there was no man who had any talents—real or fancied—for thumping or being thumped, but had experienced some *preeing* of his merits from Mr. Wilson. All other pretensions in the gymnastic arts he took a pride in humbling or in honouring; but chiefly his examinations fell upon pugilism; and not a man, who could either 'give' or 'take,' but boasted to have punished, or to have been punished by, *Wilson of Mallens.**

A little before the time at which my acquaintance

* The usual colloquial corruption of *Magdalen* in Ox. is *Maudlin;* but amongst the very *lie dupeuple*, it is called *Mallens.*

with Mr. Wilson commenced, he had purchased a beautiful estate on the lake of Windermere, which bore the ancient name of *Elleray*—a name which, with his customary good taste, Mr. Wilson has never disturbed. With the usual latitude of language in such cases, I say *on* Windermere; but in fact this charming estate lies far above the lake; and one of the most interesting of its domestic features is the foreground of the rich landscape which connects, by the most gentle scale of declivities, this almost aërial altitude [as, for *habitable* ground, it really is] with the sylvan margin of the deep water which rolls a mile and a half below. When I say a mile and a half, you will understand me to compute the descent according to the undulations of the ground; because else the perpendicular elevation above the level of the lake cannot be above one half of that extent. Seated on such an eminence, but yet surrounded by foregrounds of such quiet beauty, and settling downwards towards the lake by such tranquil steps as to take away every feeling of precipitous or dangerous elevation, Elleray possesses a double character of beauty, rarely found in connection; and yet each, by singular good fortune, in this case absolute and unrivalled in its kind. Within a bow-shot of each other may be found stations of the deepest seclusion, fenced in by verdurous walls of insuperable forest heights, and presenting a limited scene of beauty—deep, solemn, noiseless, severely sequestered—and other stations of a magnificence so gorgeous as few estates in this island can boast, and of those few perhaps none in such close connection with a dwelling-house. Stepping out from the very windows of the

drawing-room, you find yourself on a terrace which gives you the feeling of a 'specular height,' such as you might expect on Ararat, or might appropriately conceive on 'Athos seen from Samothrace.' The whole course of a noble lake, about eleven miles long, lies subject to your view, with many of its islands, and its two opposite shores so different in character—the one stern, precipitous, and gloomy; the other (and luckily the hither one) by the mere bounty of nature and of accident—by the happy disposition of the ground originally, and by the fortunate equilibrium between the sylvan tracts, meandering irregularly through the whole district, and the proportion left to verdant fields and meadows,—wearing the character of the richest park scenery; except indeed that this character is here and there a little modified by a quiet hedge-row or the stealing smoke which betrays the embowered cottage of a labourer. But the sublime, peculiar, and not-to-be-forgotten feature of the scene is the great system of mountains which unite about five miles off at the head of the lake to lock in and inclose this noble landscape. The several ranges of mountains which stand at various distances within six or seven miles of the little town of Ambleside, all separately various in their forms and all eminently picturesque, when seen from Elleray appear to blend and group as parts of one connected whole; and when their usual drapery of clouds happens to take a fortunate arrangement, and the sunlights are properly broken and thrown from the most suitable quarter of the heavens,—I cannot recollect any spectacle in England or Wales, of the many hundreds I have seen, bearing a local, if not a national reputation for magnificence of

prospect, which so much dilates the heart with a sense of power and aërial sublimity as this terrace view from Elleray. It is possible that I may have stood on other mountain terraces commanding as ample a view and as happily combined; but the difference of effect must always be immense between a spectacle to which you ascend by half a day's labour, and that upon which you are launched in a second of time from the breakfast table. It is of great importance, for the enjoyment of any natural scene, to be liberated from the necessity of viewing it under circumstances of haste and anxiety, to have it in one's power to surrender oneself passively and tranquilly to the influences of the objects as they gradually reveal themselves, and to be under no summons to crowd one's whole visual energy and task of examination within a single quarter of an hour. Having seen Elleray at all times under these favourable circumstances, it is certainly not impossible that I may unconsciously have overrated in some degree its pretensions in comparison with some rival scenes. I may have committed the common error of attributing to the *objects* the whole sum of an impression which in part belonged to the *subjective* advantages of the contemplator and the benefits of his station. But, making every allowance in this direction, I am still of opinion that Elleray has, in connection with the merits common to all scenes of its class, others peculiar to itself—and such as are indispensable conditions for the full effect of all the rest. In particular, I would instance this: To bring any scene upon a level of competition with Elleray as to range and majesty of prospect, it is absolutely essential that

it should occupy an equal elevation, or one not conspicuously inferior. Now, it is seldom indeed that eminences so commanding are not, by that very circumstance, unfitted to the picturesque aspects of things: in fact I remember no tract of ground so elevated as Elleray from which the lowest level of the adjacent country does not take a petty, dotted, and map-like appearance. But this effect, which is so heavy a price for the sublimities of the upper regions, at Elleray is entirely intercepted by the exquisite gradations of descent by which the contiguous grounds begin their fall to the level of the lake: the moment that this fall in any quarter becomes accelerated and precipitous, it is concealed by the brows of this beautiful hanging foreground; and so happily is this remedy applied, that in every instance where the lowest grounds would, if seen at all, from their immediate proximity, be seen by the spectator looking down perpendicularly as into a well, there they are uniformly hidden; and these lowest levels first emerge to view at a remote distance—where, being necessarily viewed obliquely, they suffer no peculiar disadvantage by being viewed from an eminence. In short, to sum up the whole in one word, the splendours of Elleray, which could not have been had but at an unusual elevation, are by a rare bounty of nature obtained without one of those sacrifices for the learned eye which are usually entailed upon that one single advantage of unusual elevation.

The beautiful estate, which I have thus described to you, was ornamented by no suitable dwelling-house at the time when it was purchased by Mr. Wilson: there was indeed a rustic cottage, most picturesquely

situated, which, with the addition of a drawing-room thrown out at one end, was made for the present (and, as it turned out, for many a year to come) capable of meeting the hospitable system of life adopted by its owner. But, with a view to more ample and luxurious accommodations, even at that early period of his possession (1808), Mr. Wilson began to build a mansion of larger and more elegant proportions. The shell, and perhaps the greater part of the internal work, was soon finished; but for some reason, which I never remember to have inquired into, was not rendered thoroughly habitable (and consequently not inhabited) till the year 1825. I think it worth while to mention this house particularly, because it has always appeared to me a silent commentary on its master's state of mind, and an exemplification of his character both as it was and as it appeared. At first sight there was an air of adventurousness, or even of extravagance about the plan and situation of the building; and yet upon a considerate examination (and latterly upon a practical trial) of it, I cannot see that within the same dimensions it would have been possible to have contrived a more judicious or commodious house. Thus, for instance, the house is planted upon the boldest and most exposed point of ground that can be found on the whole estate, consequently upon that which might have presumed (and I believe was really reputed) to be the very stormiest: yet, whether from counteracting screens of wood that have since been reared in fortunate situations, or from what other cause I know not, but undoubtedly at this day no practical inconvenience is suffered; though it is true, I believe, that

in the earlier years of its history, the house bore witness occasionally, by dismal wrecks of roof and windows, to the strength and fury of the wind on one particular quarter. Again, in the internal arrangements one room was constructed of such ample proportions, with a view to dancing, that the length (as I remember) was about seventy feet; the other dimensions I have forgotten. Now, in this instance most people saw an evidence of nothing but youthful extravagance, and a most disproportionate attention directed to one single purpose, which upon that scale could not probably be of very frequent occurrence in *any* family. This by the way was at any rate a sensible extravagance in my judgment; for our English mode of building tends violently to the opposite and most unwholesome extravagance of giving to the very principal room of a house the beggarly proportions of closets. However, the sequel showed that in providing for one end, Mr. Wilson had not lost sight of others: for the seventy-feet room was so divided by strong folding-doors, or temporary partitions, as in its customary state to exhibit three rooms of ordinary proportions, and unfolded its full extent only by special and extraordinary mechanism. Other instances I might give in which the plan seemed to be extravagant or inconsiderate, and yet really turned out to have been calculated with the coolest judgment and the nicest foresight of domestic needs. It is sufficient to say that I do not know a house apparently more commodiously arranged than this, which was planned and built with utmost precipitation, and in the very heyday of a most tempestuous youth. In one thing only, upon a retrospect at this

day of the whole case, there may appear to have been some imprudence, viz. that timber being then at a most unprecedented high price, it is probable that the building cost seven or eight hundred pounds more than it would have done a few years later. Allowing for this one oversight, the principal house on the Elleray estate, which at the time was looked upon as an evidence of Mr. Wilson's flightiness of mind, remains at this day a lasting monument of his good sense and judgment.

Whilst I justify him, however, on this head, I am obliged to admit that on another field, at that very time, Mr. Wilson was displaying the most reckless profusion. A sailing club had been established on Windermere, by whom I never heard; very probably by Mr. Wilson himself; at all events, he was the leader and the soul of the confederation; and he applied annually nothing less than a little fortune to the maintenance of the many expenses which arose out of it. Amongst the members of the club there were more than one who had far larger fortunes than Mr. Wilson could ever have possessed; but he would permit no one to outshine him on this arena. The number of his boats was so great as to compose a little fleet; and some of them, of unusually large dimensions for this lake, had been built at an enormous expense by regular builders brought over expressly from the port of Whitehaven (distant from Elleray about forty-five miles), and kept during the whole progress of their labour at a most expensive Lakers' hotel. One of these boats in particular, a ten-oared barge, which you will find specially introduced by name in Professor Wilson's tale of *The Foresters*

(*vide* p. 215), was generally believed at the time to have cost him at the least five hundred pounds. And as the number of sailors which it required to man these boats was necessarily very great at particular seasons, and as the majority of these sailors lived during the period of their services, with little or no restraint upon their expenses at the most costly inn in the neighbourhood,—it may be supposed very readily that about this time Mr. Wilson's lavish expenditure, added to the demands of architects and builders, and the recent purchase of Elleray, must have seriously injured his patrimonial property,—though generally believed to have been originally considerably more than thirty thousand (many asserted forty thousand) pounds. In fact, he had never less than three establishments going on concurrently for some years; one at the town or village of Bowness (the little port of the lake of Windermere), for his boatmen; one at the Ambleside Hotel, about five miles distant, for himself; and a third at Elleray, for his servants, and the occasional resort of himself and his friends. It is the opinion of some people that about this time, and during the succeeding two years, Mr. Wilson dissipated the main bulk of his patrimony in profuse expenditure. But more considerate people see no ground for that opinion: his expenses, though great, were never adequate to the dilapidation of so large an estate as he was reputed to have inherited: and the prevailing opinion is that some great loss of £20,000 at a blow, by the failure of some trustee or other, was the true cause of that diminution in his property which, within a year or two from this time, he is generally supposed to have suffered. However,

as Mr. Wilson himself has always maintained an obstinate silence on the subject, and as the mere fact of the loss (however probable) is not more accurately known to me than its extent, or its particular mode, or its cause,—I shall not allow myself to make any conjectural speculations on the subject. It can be interesting to you and me only from one of its consequences, viz. its leading him afterwards to seek a professorship: for most certain it is, that, if the splendour of Mr. Wilson's youthful condition as to pecuniary matters had not been in some remarkable degree overcast, and suffered some signal eclipse, he would never have surrendered any part of that perfect liberty which was so dear to him, for all the honours and rewards that could have been offered by the foremost universities of Europe.

You will have heard, no doubt, from some of those with whom you conversed about Professor Wilson when you were in Europe, or you may have read it in Peter's Letters, that in very early life (probably about the age of eighteen) he had formed a scheme for penetrating into central Africa, visiting the city of Tombuctoo, and solving (if it were possible) the great outstanding problem of the course of the Niger. To this scheme he was attracted probably not so much by any particular interest in the improvement of geographical knowledge, as by the youthful spirit of romantic adventure, and a very uncommon craving for whatever was grand—indefinite—and gigantic in conception, supposing that it required at the same time great physical powers in the execution. There cannot be a doubt for us at this day, who look back upon the melancholy list of victims in this perilous

field of discovery which has been furnished by the two or three and twenty years elapsed since Mr. Wilson's plan was in agitation, that in that enterprise —had he ever irretrievably embarked himself upon it—he would infallibly have perished; for, though reasonably strong, he was not strong upon that heroic scale which an expedition so Titanic demands; and what was perhaps still more important, if strong enough—he was not *hardy* enough, as a gentleman rarely is, more especially where he has literary habits; because the exposure to open air, which is the indispensable condition of hardiness, is at any rate interrupted—even if it were not counteracted—by the luxurious habits and the relaxing atmosphere of the library and the drawing-room. Moreover, Mr. Wilson's constitution was irritable and disposed to fever; his temperament was too much that of a man of genius not to have furnished a mine of inflammable materials for any tropical climate; his prudence, as regarded his health, was not remarkable; and if to all these internal and personal grounds of danger you add the incalculable hazards of the road itself, every friend of Mr. Wilson's must have rejoiced on hearing that in 1808, when I first met him, this Tim- (or Tom-) buctoo scheme was already laid aside.

Yet, as the stimulus of danger, in one shape or other, was at that time of life perhaps essential to his comfort, he soon substituted another scheme, which at this day might be accomplished with ease and safety enough, but in the year 1809 (under the rancorous system of Bonaparte) was full of hazard. In this scheme he was so good as to associate myself as one of his travelling companions, together with an

earlier friend of his own—an Englishman, of a philosophical turn of mind, with whom he had been a fellow-student at Glasgow; and we were certainly all three of an age and character to have enjoyed the expedition in the very highest degree, had the events of the war allowed us to realise our plan. The plan was as follows: from Falmouth, by one of the regular packets, we were to have sailed to the Tagus; and, landing wherever accident should allow us, to purchase mules—hire Spanish servants—and travel extensively in Spain and Portugal for eight or nine months; thence, by such of the islands in the Mediterranean as particularly interested us, we were gradually to have passed into Greece, and thence to Constantinople. Finally, we were to have visited the Troad, Syria, Egypt, and perhaps Nubia. I feel it almost ludicrous to sketch the outline of so extensive a tour, no part of which was ever executed; such a Barmacide feast is laughable in the very rehearsal. Yet it is bare justice to ourselves to say that on our parts there was no slackness or *make-believe:* what put an extinguisher upon our project was the entrance of Napoleon into Spain, his immediate advance upon Madrid, and the wretched catastrophe of the expedition so miserably misconducted under Sir John Moore. The *prestige* of French generalship was at that time a nightmare upon the courage and spirit of hopeful exertion throughout Europe; and the earliest dawn was only then beginning to arise of that glorious experience which was for ever to dissolve it. Sir J. Moore, and through him his gallant but unfortunate army, was the last conspicuous victim to the mere sound and *humbug* (if you will excuse a coarse

expression) of the words *Napoleon Bonaparte*. What he fled from was precisely those two words. And the timid policy, adopted by Sir John on that memorable occasion, would—among other greater and national consequences—have had this little collateral interest to us unfortunate travellers, had our movements been as speedy as we had anticipated, that it would have cost us our heads. A certain bulletin, issued by Bonaparte at that time, sufficiently apprised us of that little truth. In this bulletin Bonaparte proclaimed with a careless air, but making at the same time somewhat of a boast of it, that having happened to meet a party of sixteen British travellers—persons of whom he had ascertained nothing at all but that they did not bear a military character—he had issued a summary order that they should all be strung up without loss of time by the neck. In this little facetious anecdote, as Bonaparte seemed to think it, we read the fate that we had escaped. Had nothing occurred to retard our departure from this country, we calculated that the route we had laid down for our daily motions would have brought us to Guadarama (or what was the name of the pass?) just in time to be hanged. Having a British general at our backs with an army of more than thirty thousand effective men, we should certainly have roamed in advance with perfect reliance upon the old British policy of fighting, for which we could never have allowed ourselves to dream of such a substitute as a flight through all the passes of Gallicia on the principle of '*the D— take the hindmost*.' Infallibly also we should have been surprised by the extraordinary rapidity at that time of the French move-

ments; our miserable shambling mules, with their accursed tempers, would have made but a shabby attempt at flight before a squadron of light cavalry; and in short, as I said before, we should have come just in time to be hanged. And hanged we should all have been: though *why*, and upon what principle, it would be difficult to say; and probably that question would have been left to after consideration in some more philosophical age. You will suppose naturally that we rejoiced at our escape; and so undoubtedly we did. Yet for my part I had, among nineteen-twentieths of joy, just one-twentieth of a lingering regret that we had missed the picturesque fate that awaited us. The reason was this: it has been through life an infirmity of Mr. Wilson's (at least in my judgment an infirmity) to think too indulgently of Bonaparte, not merely in an intellectual point of view, but even with reference to his pretensions—hollower, one would think, than the wind—to moral elevation and magnanimity. Such a mistake, about a man who could never in any one instance bring himself to speak generously, or even forbearingly of an enemy, rouses my indignation as often as I recur to it; and in Professor Wilson, I have long satisfied myself that it takes its rise from a more comprehensive weakness, the greatest in fact which besets his mind, viz. a general tendency to bend to the prevailing opinion of the world, and a constitutional predisposition to sympathise with power and whatsoever is triumphant. Hence, I could not but regret most poignantly the capital opportunity I had forfeited of throwing in a deep and stinging sarcasm at his idol, just at the moment when we should have been waiting to be

turned off. I know Professor Wilson well: though a brave man, at twenty-two he enjoyed life with a rapture that few men have ever known, and he would have clung to it with awful tenacity. Horribly he would have abominated the sight of the rope, and ruefully he would have sighed if I had suggested to him on the gallows any thoughts of that beautiful and quiet Elleray which he had left behind in England. Just at that moment I acknowledge that it would have been fiendish, but yet what a heaven of a luxury it would have been in the way of revenge—to have stung him with some neat epigram, that I might have composed in our walk to the gallows, or while the ropes were getting into tune, on the generosity and magnanimity of Bonaparte! Perhaps, in a sober estimate, hanging might be too heavy a price for the refutation of a single error; yet still, at times, when my moral sense is roused and provoked by the obstinate blindness of Professor Wilson to the meanness and *parvanimity** of Bonaparte (a blindness which in him, as in all other worshippers of false idols, is connected at the moment with intense hatred for those who refuse to partake in it), a wandering regret comes over me that we should have missed so fine an opportunity for gathering in our own persons some of those redundant bounties which the Corsican's 'magnanimity' at that time scattered from his cornucopia of malice to the English name upon all his unfortunate prisoners of that nation.

* I coin this word *parvanimity* as an adequate antithesis to *magnanimity;* for the word *pusillanimity* has received from usage such a confined determination to one single idea, viz. the defect of spirit and courage, that it is wholly unfitted to be the antipode to the complex idea of magnanimity.

But enough of this; an event soon occurred in Mr. Wilson's life which made it a duty to dismiss for ever all travelling schemes that were connected with so much hazard as this. The fierce *acharnement* of Bonaparte so pointedly directed to everything English, and the prostration of the Continent, which had enabled him absolutely to seal every port of Europe against an Englishman, who could now no longer venture to stray a mile beyond the range of the ship's guns, which had brought him to the shore, without the certainty of being arrested as a spy,—this unheard-of condition of things had at length compelled all English gentlemen to reconcile themselves for the present to the bounds of their own island; and, accordingly, in the spring of 1809, we three unhanged friends had entirely weaned our minds from the travelling scheme which had so completely occupied our thoughts in 1808. Mr. Wilson in particular gave himself up to the pleasures and occupations furnished by the neighbourhood of Windermere, which at that time were many and various; living myself at a distance of nine miles from Elleray, I did not see much of him through this year 1809; in 1810 he married a young English lady, greatly admired for her beauty and the elegance of her manners, who was generally supposed to have brought him a fortune of about ten thousand pounds. In saying *that*, I violate no confidence at any time reposed in me, for I rely only on the public voice—which, in this instance, I have been told by well-informed persons, was tolerably correct. Be that as it may, however, in other respects I have the best reasons for believing that this marriage connection has proved the happiest event of Mr.

Wilson's life; and that the delightful temper and disposition of his wife have continued to shed a sunshine of peace and quiet happiness over his domestic establishment, which were well worth all the fortunes in the world. This lady has brought him a family of two sons and three daughters, all interesting by their personal appearance and their manners, and at this time rapidly growing up into young men and women.

Here I should close all further notice of Mr. Wilson's life, and confine myself, through what remains of the space which I have allowed myself, to a short critical notice (such as it may be proper for a friend to write) of his literary character and merits; but one single event remains of a magnitude too conspicuous in any man's life to be dismissed wholly without mention. I should add, therefore, that, about eight or nine years after his marriage (for I forget the precise year *), Mr. Wilson offered himself a candidate for the chair of Moral Philosophy in the University in Edinburgh, which had recently become vacant by the death of Dr. Thomas Brown, the immediate successor of Mr. Dugald Stewart. The Scotch, who know just as much about what they call 'Moral † Philosophy' and Metaphysics as the English do, viz. exactly

* [In July, 1820.]

† Everywhere in the world, except in Scotland, by *moral* philosophy is meant the philosophy of the will, as opposed to the philosophy of the intellect; in Scotland only the word *moral* is used, by the strongest abuse, as a comprehensive designation of whatsoever is not *physical;* so that in the cycle of knowledge, undertaken by the Edinburgh Professor of Moral Philosophy, are included logic, metaphysics, ethics, psychology, anthropology,—and, in one word, almost all human knowledge, with the exception of physics and mathematics.

nothing at all, pride themselves prodigiously upon these two names of Dugald Stewart and Dr. Brown, and imagine that they filled the chair with some peculiar brilliance. Upon that subject a word or two farther on. Meantime this notion made the contest peculiarly painful and invidious, amongst ungenerous enemies, for any untried man—no matter though his real merits had been a thousand times greater than those of his predecessors. This Mr. Wilson found; he had made himself enemies; whether by any unjustifiable violences, and wanton provocations on his own part, I have no means of knowing. In whatever way created, however, these enemies now used the advantages of the occasion with rancorous malignity, and persecuted him at every step with unrelenting fury. Very different was the treatment he met with from his competitor in the contest; in that one circumstance of the case, the person of his competitor, he had reason to think himself equally fortunate and unfortunate; fortunate, that he should be met by the opposition of a man whose opposition was honour—a man of birth, talents, and high breeding, a good scholar, and for extensive reading and universal knowledge of books (and especially of philosophic literature) the Magliabecchi of Scotland; unfortunate on the other hand that this accomplished opponent, adorned by so many brilliant gifts that recommended him to the contested office, should happen to be his early and highly valued friend. The particular progress of the contest, and its circumstances, I am not able to state; in general I have heard in Edinburgh that, from political influences which chiefly governed the course of the election, the

conduct of the partisans (perhaps on both sides) was intemperate, personal, and unjust; whilst that of the principals and their immediate friends was full of forbearance and generosity. The issue was, that Mr. Wilson carried the Professorship,—by what majority of votes, I am unable to say; and you will be pleased to hear that any little coolness, which must naturally have succeeded to so warm a contest, has long since passed away; and the two rival candidates have been for many years restored to their early feelings of mutual esteem and regard.

Here I pause for everything that concerns in the remotest way the incidents of Professor Wilson's life; one letter I mean to add, as I have already promised, on the particular position which he occupies in relation to modern literature; and then I have done. Meantime, let me hope that you have not so far miscalculated my purpose as to have been looking out for anecdotes (*i. e.* scandal) about Professor Wilson throughout the course of this letter; since, if in any case I could descend to cater for tastes of that description (which I am persuaded, are naturally no tastes of *your* family),—you must feel, on reflection, how peculiarly impossible it is to take that course in sketching the character of a friend, because the very means, by which in almost every case one becomes possessed of such private anecdotes, are the opportunities thrown in one's way by the confiding negligence of affectionate friendship; opportunities therefore which must be for ever sacred to every man of honour.

Yours most faithfully,

PARMENIDES.

1855 or 8

THE LAKE DIALECT.

To the Editor of 'Titan.'

My Dear Sir,—I send you a few hasty notes upon Mr. Robert Ferguson's little work (relating to the dialect current at the English Lakes).* Mr. Ferguson's book is learned and seasonable, adapted to the stage at which such studies have now arrived among us, and adapted also to a popular use. I am sure that Mr. Ferguson knows a great deal more about his very interesting theme than *I* do. Nevertheless, I presume to sit in judgment upon him; or so it will be inferred from my assuming the office of his reviewer. But in reality I pretend to no such ambitious and invidious functions. What I propose to do, in this hasty and *extempore* fashion, is—simply to take a seat in Mr. Ferguson's court as an *amicus curiæ*, and occasionally to suggest a doubt, by possibility an amendment; but more often to lead astray judge, jury, and docile audience into matter growing out of the subject, but very seldom leading back into it, too often, perhaps, having little to do with it; pleasant by possibility, according to Foote's judgment in a parallel case, 'pleasant, but wrong.' No great matter if it should

* *The Northmen in Cumberland and Westmoreland.* By Robert Ferguson. Carlisle: Steel & Brother. London: Longmans & Co.

be so. It will be read within the privileged term of Christmas;* during which licensed saturnalia it can be no blame to any paper, that it is 'pleasant, but wrong.'

I begin with lodging a complaint against Mr. Ferguson, namely, that he has ignored me—me, that in some measure may be described as having broken ground originally in this interesting field of research. Me, the undoubted parent of such studies—*i. e.* the person who first solemnly proclaimed the Danish language to be the master-key for unlocking the peculiarities of the Lake dialect—me, has this undutiful son never noticed, except incidentally, and then only with some reserve, or even with a distinct scruple, as regards the particular point of information for which I am cited. Seriously, however, this very passage, which offers me the affront of utter exclusion from what I had regarded as my own peculiar territory, my own Danish ring-fence, shows clearly that no affront had been designed. Mr. Ferguson had found occasion, at p. 80, to mention that *Fairfield*, the most distinguished † of the Grasmere boundaries, and 'next neighbour to Helvellyn' (next also in

* Writing at the moment in Scotland, where Christmas is as little heard of, or popularly understood or regarded, as the Mahometan festival of Beyram or the fast of Ramadan, I ought to explain that, as Christmas Day, by adjournment from Lady Day—namely, March 25—falls uniformly on December 25, it happens necessarily that *Twelfth* Day (the adoration of the Magi at Bethlehem), which is the ceremonial close of Christmas, falls upon the 5th day of January; seven days in the old, five in the new, year.

† 'And mighty Fairfield, with its chime
Of echoes, still was keeping time.'
WORDSWORTH—*The Waggoner.*

magnitude, being above three thousand feet high), had, as regarded its name, 'been derived from the Scandinavian *faar*, sheep, in allusion to the peculiar fertility of its pastures.' He goes on thus—'This mountain' (says De Quincey) 'has large, smooth pastoral savannahs, to which the sheep resort when all its rocky or barren neighbours are left desolate.' In thus referring to myself for the character of the mountain, he does not at all suppose that he is referring to the author of the etymology. On the contrary, the very next sentence says—'I do not know who is the author of this etymology, which has been quoted by several writers; but it appears to me to be open to considerable doubt'; and this for two separate reasons, which he assigns, and which I will notice a little further on.

Meantime I pause, for the sake of saying that the derivation is mine. Thirty-seven, or it may be thirty-eight, years ago, I first brought forward my Danish views in a local newspaper—namely, *The Kendal Gazette*, published every Saturday. The rival (I may truly say—the hostile) newspaper, published also on Saturday, was called *The Westmoreland Chronicle*. The exact date of my own communication upon the dialect of the Lake district I cannot at this moment assign. Earlier than 1818 it could not have been, nor later than 1820. What first threw me upon this vein of exploring industry was, the accidental stumbling suddenly upon an interesting little incident of Westmoreland rustic life. From a roadside cottage, just as I came nearly abreast of its door, issued a little child; not old enough to walk with particular firmness, but old enough for mischief; a laughing

expression of which it bore upon its features. It was clearly in the act of absconding from home, and was hurrying earnestly to a turn of the road which it counted upon making available for concealment. But, before it could reach this point, a young woman, of remarkable beauty, perhaps twenty years old, ran out in some alarm, which was not diminished by hearing the sound of carriage-wheels rapidly coming up from a distance of probably two furlongs. The little rosy thing stopped and turned on hearing its mother's voice, but hesitated a little, until she made a gesture of withdrawing her handkerchief from her bosom, and said, coaxingly, 'Come its ways, then, and get its *patten*.' Until that reconciling word was uttered, there had been a shadow of distrust on the baby's face, as if treachery might be in the wind. But the magic of that one word *patten* wrought an instant revolution. Back the little truant ran, and the young mother's manner made it evident that she would not on *her* part forget what had passed between the high contracting parties.* What, then, could be the mean-

* It might seem odd to many people that a child able to run alone should not have been already weaned, a process of early misery that, in modern improved practice, takes place amongst opulent families at the age of six months; and, secondly, it might seem equally odd that, until weaned, any infant could be truly described as 'rosy.' I wish, however, always to be punctiliously accurate; and I can assure my readers that, generally speaking, the wives of labouring men (for more reasons than one) suckle their infants for three years, to the great indignation of medical practitioners, who denounce the practice as six times too long. Secondly, although unweaned infants are ordinarily pale, yet, amongst those approaching their eighteenth or twentieth month, there are often found children as rosy as any one can meet with.

ing of this talismanic word *patten?* Accidentally, having had a naval brother confined amongst the Danes, as a prisoner of war, for eighteen months, I knew that it meant the female bosom. Soon after I stumbled upon the meaning of the Danish word *Skyandren*—namely, what in street phrase amongst ourselves is called giving to any person a *blowing-up*. This was too remarkable a word, too bristling with harsh blustering consonants, to baffle the detecting ear, as it might have done under any masquerading *aura-textilis*, or woven air of vowels and diphthongs.

Many scores of times I had heard men threatening to *skiander* this person or that when next they should meet. Not by possibility could it indicate any mode of personal violence; for no race of men could be more mild and honourably forbearing in their intercourse with each other than the manly dalesmen of the Lakes. From the context, it had long been evident that it implied expostulation and *verbal* reproach. And now at length I learned that this was its Danish import. The very mountain at the foot of which my Grasmere cottage stood, and the little orchard attached to which formed 'the lowest step in that magnificent staircase' (such was Wordsworth's description of it), leading upwards to the summits of Helvellyn, reminded me daily of that Danish language which all around me suggested as being the secret writing—the seal—the lock that imprisoned ancient records as to thing or person, and yet again as being the key that should open this lock; as that which had hidden through many centuries, and yet also as that which should finally reveal.

I have thus come round to the name of Fairfield,

which seemed to me some forty years ago as beyond all reasonable doubt the Danish mask for *Sheep-fell.* But, in using the phrase '*reasonable* doubt,' I am far from insinuating that Mr. Ferguson's deliberate doubt is *not* reasonable. I will state both sides of the question, for neither is without some show of argument. To me it seemed next to impossible that the early Danish settlers could, under the natural pressure of prominent differences among that circuit of hills which formed the barriers of Grasmere, have failed to distinguish as the sheep mountain that sole eminence which offered a pasture ground to their sheep all the year round. In summer and autumn *all* the neighbouring fells, that were not mere rocks, yielded pasture more or less scanty. But Fairfield showed herself the *alma mater* of their flocks even in winter and early spring. So, at least, my local informants asserted. Mr. Ferguson, however, objects, as an unaccountable singularity, that on this hypothesis we shall have one mountain, and one only, classed under the *modern* Scandinavian term of *field;* all others being known by the elder name of *fell.* I acknowledge that this anomaly is perplexing. But, on the other hand, what Mr. Ferguson suggests is still more perplexing. He supposes that, 'because the summit of this mountain is such a peculiarly green and level plain, it might not inappropriately be called *a fair field.*' Certainly it might; but by Englishmen of recent generations, and not by Danish immigrants of the ninth century. To balance the anomaly of what certainly wears a faint *soupçon* of anachronism—namely, the *apparent* anticipation of the modern Norse word *field,* Mr. Ferguson's conjecture would take a headlong plunge

into good classical English. Now of this there is no other instance. Even the little swells of ground, that hardly rise to the dignity of hills, which might be expected to submit readily to changing appellations, under the changing accidents of ownership, yet still retain their primitive Scandinavian names—as *Butterlip Howe*, for example. Nor do I recollect any exceptions to this tendency, unless in the case of jocose names, such as *Skiddaw's Cub*, for Lattrig; and into this class, perhaps, falls even the dignified mountain of *The Old Man*, at the head of Coniston. Mr. Ferguson will allow that it would be as startling to the dense old Danes of King Alfred's time, if they had found a mountain of extra pretensions wearing a modern English name, as it would to the Macedonian *argyraspides*, if suspecting that, in some coming century, their mighty leader, 'the great Emathian conqueror,' could by any possible Dean of St. Patrick, and by any conceivable audacity of legerdemain, be traced back to *All-eggs-under-the-grate*. If the name really *is* good English, in that case a separate and *extra* labour arises for us all; there must have been some old Danish name for this most serviceable of fells; and then we have not merely to explain the present English name, but also to account for the disappearance of this archæological Danish name. What I would throw out conjecturally as a bare possibility is this:—When an ancient dialect (A) is gradually superseded by a more modern one (E), the flood of innovation which steals over the old reign, and gradually dispossesses it, does not rush in simultaneously as a torrent, but supervenes stealthily and unequally, according to the humouring or thwarting

of local circumstances. Nobody, I am sure, is better aware of this accident, as besetting the transit of dialects, than Mr. Ferguson. For instance, many of those words which are imported to us from the American United States, and often amuse us by their picturesqueness, have originally been carried to America by our own people; in England they lurked for ages as provincialisms, localised within some narrow circuit, and to which some trifling barrier (as a river—rivulet—or even a brook) offered a retarding force. In supercivilised England, a river, it may be thought, cannot offer much obstruction to the free current of words; ages ago it must have been bridged over. Sometimes, however, a bridge is impossible under the transcendent importance of a free navigation. For instance, at the Bristol Hotwells, the ready and fluent intercourse with Long Ashton, and a long line of adjacencies, is effectually obstructed by the necessity of an open water communication with the Bristol Channel. At one period (*i. e.* when as yet Liverpool and Glasgow were fifth-rate ports), all the wealth of the West Indies flowed into England through this little muddy ditch of the Bristol Avon, and Rownham Ferry became the exponent and measure of English intercourse with the northern nook of Somersetshire. A river is bad; but when a mountain of very toilsome ascent happens to be interposed, the interruption offered to the popular intercourse, and the results of this interruption, become much more memorable. An illustration which I can offer on this point, and which, in fact, I *did* offer (as, upon inquiry, Mr. Ferguson will find), thirty-eight years ago, happens to bear with peculiar force

upon our immediate difficulty of Fairfield. The valleys on the northern side of Kirkstone—namely, in particular, the three valleys of Patterdale, Matterdale, and Martindale—are as effectually cut off from intercourse with the valleys on the southern side—namely, the Windermere valley, Ryedale, and Grasmere, with all their tributary nooks and attachments—as though an arm of the sea had rolled between them. It costs a foot traveller half of a summer's day to effect the passage to and fro over Kirkstone (what the Greeks so tersely expressed in the case of a race-course * by the one word *diaulos*). And in *my* time no innkeeper from the Windermere side of Kirkstone would carry even a solitary individual across with fewer than four horses. What has been the result? Why, that the dialect on the northern side of Kirkstone bears the impress of a more ultra-Danish influence than that upon the Windermere side. In

* I mean that they included the progressive or outward-bound course, and equally the regressive or homeward-bound course, within the compass of this one word διαυλος. We in England have a phrase which conventionally has been made to supply the want of such an idea, but unfortunately with a limitation to the service of the Post-office. It is the phrase *course of post.* When a Newcastle man is asked, 'What is the course of post between you and Liverpool?' he understands, and by a legal decision it has been settled that he is under an obligation to understand—What is the *diaulos,* what is the flux and reflux—the to and the fro—the systole and diastole of the respiration—between you and Liverpool. What is the number of hours and minutes required for the transit of a letter from Newcastle to Liverpool, but coupled with the return transit of the answer? This forward and backward movement constitutes the *diaulos:* less than this will not satisfy the law as the complex process understood by the *course of post.* Less than this is only the half section of a *diaulos.*

particular this remarkable difference occurs: not the nouns and verbs merely are Danish amongst the trans-Kirkstonians (I speak as a Grasmerian), but even the particles—the very joints and articulations of language. The Danish *at*, for instance, is used for *to*; I do not mean for *to* the preposition: they do not say, 'Carry this letter at Mr. W.'; but as the sign of the infinitive mood. 'Tell him *at* put his spurs on, and *at* ride off for a surgeon!' Now this illustration carries along with it a proof that a stronger and a weaker infusion of the Danish element, possibly an older and a younger infusion, may prevail even in close adjacencies, provided they are powerfully divided by walls of rock that happen to be eight miles thick.

But the inexorable Press, that waits for few men under the rank of a king, and not always for *him* (as I happen to know, by having once seen a proof-sheet corrected by the royal hand of George IV., which proof exhibited some disloyal signs of impatience), forces me to adjourn all the rest to next month.—Yours ever,

THOMAS DE QUINCEY.

STORMS IN ENGLISH HISTORY:

A GLANCE AT THE REIGN OF HENRY VIII.*

WHAT two works are those for which at this moment our national intellect (or, more rigorously speaking, our *popular* intellect) is beginning clamorously to call? They are these: first, a *Conversations-Lexicon*, obeying (as regards plan and purpose) the general outline of the German work bearing that title; ministering to the same elementary necessities; implying, therefore, a somewhat corresponding stage of progress in our own populace and that of Germany; but otherwise (as regards the executive details in adapting such a work to the special service of an English public) moving under moral restraints sterner by much, and more faithfully upheld, than could rationally be looked for in any great literary enterprise resigned to purely German impulses. For over the atmosphere of thought and feeling in Germany there broods no *public* conscience. Such a *Conversations-Lexicon* is one of the two great works for which the popular mind of England is waiting and watching in silence.

* *History of England from the Fall of Wolsey to the Death of Elizabeth.* By James Anthony Froude, M.A., late Fellow of Exeter College, Oxford. Vols. I. and II. London: Parker & Son, West Strand. 1856.

The other (and not less important) work is—a faithful *History of England*. We will offer, at some future time, a few words upon the first; but upon the second—here brought before us so advantageously in the earnest, thoughtful, and oftentimes eloquent volumes of Mr. Froude—we will venture to offer three or four pages of critical comment.

Could the England of the sixteenth century have escaped that great convulsion which accompanied the dissolution of the monasteries? It is barely possible that a gentle system of periodic decimations, distributing this inevitable ruin over an entire century, might have blunted the edge of the fierce ploughshare: but there were difficulties in the way of such arrangements, that would too probably have thwarted the benign purpose.

Meantime, what was it that had stolen like a canker-worm into the machinery of these monastic bodies, and insensibly had corroded a principle originally of admitted purity? The malice of Protestantism has too readily assumed that Popery was answerable for this corrosion. But it would be hard to show that Popery in any one of its features, good or bad, manifested itself conspicuously and operatively: nay, to say the simple truth, it was through the very opposite agency that the monastic institutions came to ruin: it was because Popery, that supreme control to which these monasteries had been confided, shrank from its responsibilities—weakly, lazily, or even perfidiously, abandoned that supervisorship in default of which neither right of inspection, nor duty of inspection, nor power of inspection, was found to be lodged in any quarter—*there* it was, precisely in that

dereliction of censorial authority, that all went to ruin. All corporations grow corrupt, unless habitually kept under the eye of public inspection, or else officially liable to searching visitations. Now, who were the regular and official visitors of the English monasteries? Not the local bishops; for in that case the public clamour, the very notoriety of the scandals (as we see them reported by Wicliffe and Chaucer), would have guided the general wrath to some effectual surgery for the wounds and ulcers of the institutions. Unhappily the official visitors were the heads of the monastic orders; these, and these only. A Franciscan body, for example, owed no obedience except to the representative of St. Francis; and this representative too uniformly resided somewhere on the Continent. And thus it was that effectually and virtually English monasteries were subject to no control. Nay, the very corrections of old abuses by English parliamentary statutes had greatly strengthened the evil. Formerly, the monastic funds were drawn upon to excess in defraying the costs of a transmarine visitation. But that evil, rising into enormous proportions, was at length radically extirpated by parliamentary statutes that cut down the costs; so that continental devotees, finding their visitations no longer profitable in a pecuniary sense, sometimes even costly to themselves, and costly upon a scale but dimly intelligible to any continental experience, rapidly cooled down in their pious enthusiasm against monastic delinquencies. Hatred, at any rate, and malignant anger the visitor had to face, not impossibly some risk of assassination, in prosecuting his inquiries into the secret crimes of monks that were often confederated in a common

interest of resistance to all honest or searching inquiry. But, if to these evils were superadded others of a pecuniary class, it was easy to anticipate, under this failure of all regular inspectorship, a period of plenary indulgence to the excesses of these potent corporations. Such a period came: no man being charged with the duty of inspection, no man inspected; but never was the danger more surely at hand, than when it seemed by all ordinary signs to have absolutely died out. Already, in the days of Richard II., the doom of the monasteries might be heard muttering in the chambers of the upper air. In the angry denunciations of Wicliffe, in the popular merriment of Chaucer, might be read the same sentence of condemnation awarded against them. Fierce warnings were given to them at intervals. A petition against them was addressed by the House of Commons to Henry IV. The son of this prince, the man of Agincourt, though superstitious enough, if superstition could have availed them, had in *his* short reign (so occupied, one might have thought, with war and foreign affairs) found time to read them a dreadful warning: more than five scores of these offending bodies (Priories Alien) were suppressed by that single monarch, the laughing *Hal* of Jack Falstaff. One whole century slipped away between this penal suppression and the ministry of Wolsey. What effect can we ascribe to this admonitory chastisement upon the general temper and conduct of the monastic interest? It would be difficult beyond measure at this day to draw up any adequate report of the foul abuses prevailing in the majority of religious houses, for the three following reasons:—First, because the

main record of such abuses, after it had been elaborately compiled under the commission of Henry VIII., was (at the instigation of his eldest daughter Mary) most industriously destroyed by Bishop Bonner; secondly, because too generally the original oath of religious fidelity and secrecy, in matters interesting to the founder and the foundation, was held to interfere with frank disclosures; thirdly, because, as to much of the most crying licentiousness, its full and satisfactory detection too often depended upon a surprise. Steal upon the delinquents suddenly, and ten to one they were caught *flagrante delicto:* but upon any notice transpiring of the hostile approach, all was arranged so as to evade for the moment—or in the end to baffle finally—search alike and suspicion.

The following report, which Mr. Froude views as the liveliest of all that Bishop Bonner's zeal has spared, offers a picturesque sketch of such cases, according to the shape which they often assumed. In Chaucer's tale, told with such unrivalled *vis comica*, of the *Trompington Miller and the Two Cambridge Scholars*, we have a most life-like picture of the miller with his 'big bones,' as a 'dangerous' man for the nonce. Just such a man, just as dangerous, and just as big-boned, we find in the person of an abbot—defending his abbey, not by any reputation for sanctity or learning, but solely by his *dangerousness* as the wielder of quarter-staff and cudgel. With no bull-dog or mastiff, and taken by surprise, such an abbot naturally lost the stakes for which he played. The letter is addressed to the Secretary of State:—'Please it your goodness to understand, that on Friday the 22nd of October (1535), I rode back with speed to take

an inventory of Folkstone; and thence I went to Langden. Whereat immediately descending from my horse, I sent Bartlett, your servant, with all *my* servants, to circumsept the abbey [*i. e.* to form a hedge round about], and surely to keep [guard] all back-doors and starting holes. I myself went alone to the abbot's lodging—joining upon the fields and wood.' [This position, the reporter goes on to insinuate, was no matter of chance: but, like a rabbit-warren, had been so placed with a view to the advantages for retreat and for cover in the adjacent woodlands.] 'I was a good space knocking at the abbot's door; neither did any sound or sensible manifestation of life betray itself, saving the abbot's little dog, that within his door, fast locked, bayed and barked. I found a short pole-axe standing behind the door; and with it I dashed the abbot's door in pieces *ictu oculi* [in the twinkling of an eye]; and set one of my men to keep that door; and about the house I go with that pole-axe in my hand—*ne forte* ["*lest by any chance*" *—holding in suspense such words as "*some violence should be offered*"]—for the abbot is a dangerous, desperate knave, and a hardy. But, for a conclusion, his gentlewoman bestirred her stumps towards her starting holes; and then Bartlett, watching the pursuit, took the tender *demoisel;* and, after I had examined her, to Dover—to the mayor, to set her in some cage or prison for eight days. And I brought holy father abbot to Canterbury;

* '*Ne forte*' is a case of what is learnedly called *aposiopesis* or *reticentia;* that is, where (for the sake of effect) some emphatic words are left to be guessed at: as Virgil's *Quos ego* —— (Whom if I catch, I'll ——)

and here, in Christ Church, I will leave him in prison.'

This little interlude, offering its several figures in such life-like attitudes—its big-boned abbot prowling up and down the precincts of the abbey for the chance of a 'shy' at the intruding commissioner—the little faithful bow-wow doing its *petit possible* to warn big-bones of his danger, thus ending his faithful services by an act of farewell loyalty—and the unlucky *demoisel* scuttling away to her rabbit-warren, only to find all the spiracles and peeping-holes preoccupied or stopped, and her own 'apparel' unhappily locked up '*in the abbot his coffer*,' so as to render hopeless all evasion or subsequent denial of the fact, that ten big-boned 'indusia' (or shirts) lay interleaved in one and the same 'coffer,' *inter totidem niveas camisas* * (or chemises)—all this framed itself as a little amusing parenthesis, a sort of family picture amongst the dreadful reports of ecclesiastical commissioners.

No *suppression* of the religious houses had originally been designed; nothing more than a searching *visitation*. And at this moment, yes, at this present midsummer of 1856, waiting and looking forward to the self-same joyful renewal of leases that then was looked for in England, but not improbably, alas! summoned to the same ineffable disappointment as fell more than three centuries back upon our own

* '*Camisas*:' *i. e.* chemises; but at one time the word *camisa* was taken indifferently for shirt or chemise. And hence arose the term *camisado* for a night-attack, in which the assailants recognised each other in the dark by their white shirt-sleeves, sometimes further distinguished by a tight cincture of broad black riband. The last literal camisado, that I remember, was a nautical one—a cutting-out enterprise somewhere about 1807-8.

England—lies, waiting for her doom, a great kingdom in central Europe. She, and under the same causes, may chance to be disappointed. What was it that caused the tragic convulsion in England? Simply this: regular and healthy visitation having ceased, infinite abuses had arisen; and these abuses, it was found at last, could not be healed by any measure less searching than absolute suppression. Austria, as regards some of her provinces, stands in the same circumstances at this very moment. Imperfect visitations, that cleansed nothing, should naturally have left her religious establishments languishing for the one sole remedy that was found applicable to the England of 1540. And what was *that?* It was a remedy that carried along with it revolution. England was found able in those days to stand that fierce medicine: a more profound revolution has not often been witnessed than that of our mighty Reformation. Can Austria, considering the awful contagions amongst which her political relations have entangled her, hope for the same happy solution of her case? Perhaps a revolution, that once unlocks the fountains of blood in central Germany, will be the bloodiest of all revolutions: whereas, in our own chapters of revolution even the stormiest, those of the Marian Persecution and of the Parliamentary War, both alike moved under restraints of law and legislative policy. The very bloodiest promises of English history have replied but feebly to the clamour and expectations of cruel or fiery partisans. Different is the prospect for Austria. From her, and from the auguries of evil which becloud her else smiling atmosphere, let us turn back to our own history in this

sixteenth century, and for a moment make a brief inquest into the blood that really was shed—whether justly or not justly. Bloodshed, as an instinct—bloodshed, as an appetite—raged like a monsoon in the French Revolution, and many centuries before in the Rome of Sylla and Marius—in the Rome of the Triumvirate, and generally in the period of Proscriptions. Too fearfully it is evident that these fits of *acharnement* were underlaid and fed by paroxysms of personal cruelty. In England, on the other hand, foul and hateful as was the Marian butchery, nevertheless it cannot be denied that this butchery rested entirely upon principle. Homage offered to anti-Lutheran principles, in a moment disarmed the Popish executioner. Or if (will be the objection of the reflecting reader)—if there are exceptions to this rule, these must be looked for amongst the king's enemies. And the term 'enemies' will fail to represent adequately those who, not content with ranking themselves wilfully amongst persons courting objects irreconcilable to the king's interests, sought to exasperate the displeasure of Henry by special insults, by peculiar mortifications, and by complex ingratitude. Foremost amongst such cases stands forward the separate treason of Anne Boleyn, mysterious to this hour in some of its features, rank with pollutions such as European prejudice would class with Italian enormities, and by these very pollutions—literally by and through the very excess of the guilt—claiming to be incredible. Neither less nor more than this which follows is the logic put into the mouth of the Lady Anne Boleyn :—From the mere enormity of the guilt imputed to me, from that very abysmal stye of

incestuous adultery in which now I wallow, I challenge as of right the presumption that I am innocent; for the very reason that I am loaded in my impeachment with crimes that are inhuman, I claim to be no criminal at all. Because my indictment is revolting and monstrous, therefore is it incredible. The case, taken apart from the person, would not (unless through its mysteriousness and imperfect circumstantiation) have attracted the interest which *has* given it, and *will* in all time coming continue to give it, a root in history amongst insoluble or doubtfully soluble historical problems. The *case*, being painful and shocking, would by readers generally have long since been dismissed to darkness. But the *person*, too critically connected with a vast and immortal revolution, will for ever call back the case before the tribunals of earth. The mother of Queen Elizabeth, the mother of Protestantism in England, cannot be suffered—never *will* be suffered—to benefit by that shelter of merciful darkness which, upon any humbler person, or even upon this person in any humbler case, might be suffered to settle quietly as regards the memory of her acts. Mr. Froude, a pure-minded man, is the last man to call back into the glare of a judicial inquest deeds of horror, over which eternal silence should have brooded, had such an issue been possible. But three centuries of discussion have made *that* more and more impossible. And now, therefore, with a view to the improvement of the dispute, and, perhaps, in one or two instances, with a chance for the rectification of the '*issues*' (speaking juridically) into which the question has been allowed to lapse, Mr. Froude has in some degree re-opened

the discussion. 'The guilt,' he says, 'must rest where it is due. But under any hypothesis guilt there *was*—dark, mysterious, and most miserable.'

Tell this story how you may, and the evidence remains of guilt under *any* hypothesis—guilt such as in Grecian tragedy was seen thousands of years ago hanging in clouds of destiny over princely houses, and reading to them a doom of utter ruin, root and branch, in which, as in the anarchy of hurricanes, no form or feature was descried distinctly—nothing but some dim fluctuating phantom, pointing with recording finger to that one ancestral crime through which the desolation had been wrought.

Mr. Froude, through his natural sense of justice, and his deep study of the case, is unfavourably disposed towards the Lady Anne Boleyn: nevertheless he retains lingering doubts on her behalf, all of which, small and great, we have found reason to dismiss. We, for our parts, are thoroughly convinced of her guilt. Our faith is, that no shadow of any ground exists for suspending the verdict of the sentence; but at the same time for mitigating that sentence there arose this strong argument—namely, that amongst women not formally pronounced idiots, there never can have been one more pitiably imbecile.

There is a mystery hanging over her connection with the king which nobody has attempted to disperse We will ourselves suggest a few considerations that may bring a little coherency amongst the scattered glimpses of her fugitive court life. The very first thought that presents itself, is a sentiment, that would be pathetic in the case of a person entitled to more respect, upon the brevity of her public career.

Apparently she lost the king's favour almost in the very opening of her married life. But in what way? Not, we are persuaded, through the king's caprice. There was hardly time for caprice to have operated; and her declension in favour from that cause would have been gradual. Time there was none for her beauty to decay—neither *had* it decayed. We are disposed to think that in a very early stage of her intercourse with the king, she had irritated the king by one indication of mental imbecility rarely understood even amongst medical men—namely, the offensive habit of laughing profusely without the least sense of anything ludicrous or comic. Oxford, or at least one of those who shot at the Queen, was signally distinguished by this habit. Without reason or pretext, he would break out into causeless laughter, not connected with any impulse that he could explain. With this infirmity Anne Boleyn was plagued in excess. On the 2nd of May, 1536, the very first day on which she was made aware of the dreadful accusations hanging over her good name and her life, on being committed to the Tower, and taken by Sir William Kingston, the governor, to the very same chambers in which she had lain at the period of her coronation, she said, 'It' (meaning the suite of rooms) 'is too good for me; Jesu, have mercy on me;' next she kneeled down, 'weeping a great space.' Such are Sir William's words; immediately after which he adds, 'and in the same sorrow fell into a great laughing.' A day or two later than this, she said, 'Master Kingston, shall I die without justice?'—meaning, it seems, would she be put to death without any judicial examination of her case; upon which Sir

William replied, 'The poorest subject the king hath, had justice'—meaning, that previously to such an examination of his case, he could not by regular course of justice be put to death. Such was the question of the prisoner—such was the answer of the king's representative. What occasion was here suggested for rational laughter? And yet laughter was her sole comment. 'Therewith,' says Sir William, 'she laughed.' On May 18th, being the day next before that of her execution, she said, 'Master Kingston, I hear say I shall not die afore noon; and I am very sorry therefore, for I thought to be dead by this time, and past my pain.' Upon this Sir William assured her 'it should be no pain, it was so subtle;' meaning that the stroke of a sword by a powerful arm, applied to a slender neck, could not meet resistance enough to cause any serious pain. She replied, 'I heard say the executioner was very good, and I have a little neck;' after which she laughed heartily. Sir William so much misunderstood this laughter, which was doubtless of the same morbid and idiotic character as all the previous cases, that he supposes her to have had 'much joy and pleasure in death,' which is a mere misconstruction of the case. Even in the very act of dying she could not check her smiling, which assuredly was as morbid in its quality and origin as what of old was known as '*risus sardonicus*.'

Carrying along with us, therefore, a remembrance of this repulsive habit, which argues a silliness so constitutional, and noting also the obstinate (almost it might be called the brutal) folly with which, during the last seventeen days of her life, she persisted in

criminating herself, volunteering a continued rehearsal of conversations the most profligate, under a mere instinct of gossiping, we shall begin to comprehend the levity which no doubt must have presided in her conversations with the king. Too evidently in a court but recently emerging from barbarism, there was a shocking defect of rules or fixed ceremonial for protecting the dignity of the queen and of her female attendants. The settlement of any such rules devolved upon the queen herself, in default of any traditional system; and unhappily here was a queen without sense, without prudence, without native and sexual dignity for suggesting or upholding such restraints, and whose own breeding and experience had been purely French. Strange it was that the king's good sense, or even his jealousy, had not peremptorily enjoined, as a caution of mere decency, the constant presence of some elderly matrons, uniting rank and station with experience and good sense. But not the simplest guarantees for ordinary decorum were apparently established in the royal household. And the shocking spectacle was daily to be seen, of a young woman, singularly beautiful, atrociously silly, and without common self-respect, styling herself Queen of England, yet exacting no more respect or homage than a housemaid, suffering young men, the most licentious in all England, openly to speculate on the contingency of her husband's death, to talk of it in language the coarsest, as 'waiting for dead men's shoes,' and bandying to and fro the chances that this man or that man, according to the whim of the morning, should 'have her,' or should *not* 'have her' —that is, have the reversion of the queen's person as

a derelict of the king. All this, though most injurious to her prospects, was made known by Anne Boleyn herself to the female companions who were appointed to watch her revelations in prison. And certainly no chambermaid ever rehearsed her own colloquies with these vile profligates in a style of thinking more abject than did at this period the female majesty of England. Listening to no accuser, but simply to the unsolicited revelations of the queen herself, as she lay in bed amongst her female attendants in the Tower, every man of sense becomes aware, that if these presumptuous young libertines abstained from daily proposals to the queen of the most criminal nature, *that* could arise only from the reserve and suspicion incident to a state of rivalship, and not from any deference paid to the queen's personal pretensions, or to her public character.

Three years, probably one-half of that term, had seen the beginning, the decay, and the utter extinction of the king's affection for Anne. It is known now, and at the time it had furnished a theme for conjecture, that very soon after his marriage the king manifested uneasiness, and not long after angry suspicions, upon matters connected with the queen. We have no doubt that she herself, whilst seeking to amuse the king with fragments of her French experiences, had, through mere oversight and want of tact, unintentionally betrayed the risks to which her honour had been at times exposed. Without presence of mind, without inventive talent or rapidity of artifice, she would often compromise herself, and overshoot her momentary purposes of furnishing amusement to the king. He had heard too much.

He believed no longer in her purity. And very soon, as a natural consequence, she ceased to interest him. The vague wish to get rid of her would for some time suggest no hopeful devices towards such a purpose. For some months, apparently, he simply neglected her. This neglect unhappily it was that threw her unprotected upon the vile society of young libertines. Two of these—Sir Henry Norris and Sir Francis Weston—had been privileged friends of the king. But no restraints of friendship or of duty had checked their designs upon the queen. Either special words, or special acts, had been noticed and reported to the king. Thenceforward a systematic watch had been maintained upon all parties. Discoveries more shocking than anybody looked for had been made. The guilty parties had been careless: blind themselves, they thought all others blind; but, during the April of 1536, the Privy Council had been actively engaged in digesting and arranging the information received.

On May-day, the most gladsome day in the whole year, according to the usages of that generation, the dreadful news transpired of the awful accusations and the impending trials. Smeton, a musician, was the only person not of gentlemanly rank amongst the accused. He was accused of adultery with the queen; and he confessed the offence; never retracting that part of his confession. In discussing the probabilities of the case, it is necessary to use special and extraordinary caution. The confession, for instance, of Anne herself has been treated as hollow and unmeaning; because, it is alleged, the king's promise of indulgence and favour to her infant

daughter was purchased under the condition of confession. It is clear that such a traffic would not have been available except in special and exceptional cases. As to Smeton, he did not at all meet the king's expectations, except as to the one point of confessing the adultery. Consequently, as he was quite disinterested, had nothing at all to gain, and did gain nothing by his confession, *him* we are obliged to believe. On the other hand, the *non*-confession of some amongst the gentlemen, if any there were that steadfastly adhered to this non-confession, proves nothing at all; since *they* thought it perfidy to confess such a case against a woman. Meantime, Constantyne, a known friend of Sir H. Norris and of Sir W. Brereton, two of the four gentlemen accused, declares that, for himself, being a Protestant, and knowing the queen's secret leaning to that party, he and all other 'friends of the gospel' could not bring themselves to believe that the queen had behaved so abominably. 'As I may be saved before God,' he says, 'I could not believe it, afore I heard them speak at their death. But on the scaffold, in a manner *all* confessed, unless Norris; and as to *him*, what he said amounted to nothing.' The truth is, there occurred in the cases of these gentlemen a dreadful struggle. The dilemma for *them* was perhaps the most trying upon record. Gallantry and manly tenderness forbade any man's confessing, for a certain result of ruin to a woman, any treasonable instances of love which she had shown to him. Yet, on the other hand, to deny was to rush into the presence of God with a lie upon their lips. Hence the unintelligible character of their final declarations. Smeton, as no gentleman, was

hanged. All the other four—Norris, Brereton, Weston, and Rochford—were beheaded. The four gentlemen and Smeton suffered all on the same day —namely, Wednesday, the 17th of May. Of all the five, Sir W. Brereton was the only one whose guilt was doubted. Yet he was the most emphatic in declaring his own guilt. If he could die a thousand deaths, he said, all would be deserved.

But the crime of all the rest seemed pale by the side of Rochford's. He had been raised to the peerage by Henry, as an expression of his kindness to the Boleyn family. He was the brother of Anne; and whilst the others had offended by simple adultery with Anne, *his* crime was incestuous adultery; and his dying words appeared (to the *auditors*), 'if not,' says Mr. Froude, 'a confession, yet something too nearly resembling it.'

From such dreadful offences, all readers are glad to hurry away; yet in one respect this awful impeachment has a reconciling effect. No reader after this wishes for further life to Anne. For her own sake it is plain that through death must lie the one sole peaceful solution of her unhappy and erring life. Some people have most falsely supposed that the case against the brother and sister, whatever might be pronounced upon the four other cases, laboured under antecedent improbabilities so great as to vitiate, or to load with suspicion, the entire case of the Privy Council. But, on the contrary, the shocking monstrosity of the charge strengthens the anti-Boleyn impeachment. As a means for getting rid of Anne, the Rochford case was not at all needed. If it could even in dreams be represented as false, the injury

offered to the Boleyns, whilst quite superfluous for any purpose of Henry's, would be too atrocious an outrage upon truth and natural justice for human nature to tolerate. The very stones would mutiny against such a calumny coming as a crown or crest to other injuries separately unendurable, if they could once be regarded as injuries at all. Under these circumstances, what should we think of a call upon Lord Berkshire, the very father of Anne Boleyn, to sit as one of the judges upon the cases. Not, indeed, upon the cases of his son and his daughter; from such Roman trials of fortitude he was excused; but on the other cases he was required to officiate as one of the judges. And, in fact, the array of rank and splendour, as exhibited in the persons of those who composed the court, surpassed anything previously known in England. On the part of the crown, it was too keenly felt that the deep personal interest of the king, in obtaining liberty to form a new marriage connection with Jane Seymour, would triumphantly outweigh all the justice that ever could be arrayed against the two Boleyns. Nothing could win a moment's audience for the royal cause, except an unparalleled and matchless splendour in the composition of the court. This, therefore, was secured. Pretty nearly the whole peerage of that period was embattled upon the bench of judges.

Meantime, the tragedy, so far as the queen is concerned, took a turn which convicts all parties of a blunder; of a blunder the most needless and superfluous. This blunder was exposed by Bishop Burnet about a hundred and fifty years later, but most insufficiently exposed; and to this hour it has not

been satisfactorily cleared up. Let us pursue the arrears of the case. The four gentlemen, together with Mark Smeton, were executed (as we have seen) on Wednesday, the 17th of May, 1536. Two days later Queen Anne Boleyn was brought out at noonday upon the verdant lawn within the Tower, and with very slight ceremonies she suffered decapitation. A single cannon-shot proclaimed to London and Westminster the final catastrophe of this unhappy romance. Anne had offered not one word of self-vindication on this memorable occasion; and, if her motive to so signal a forbearance were really consideration for the interests of her infant daughter, it must be granted that she exhibited, in the farewell act of her life, a grandeur of self-conquest which no man could have anticipated. For this act she has never received the homage which she deserved; whilst, on the other hand, praise most unmerited has been given for three centuries to the famous letter of self-defence which she is reputed to have addressed to the king at the opening of her trial. This letter, beyond all doubt a forgery, was first brought into effectual notice by the *Spectator* somewhere about 1710; and, whether authentic or not, is most injudiciously composed. It consists of five paragraphs, each one of which is pulling distractedly in contradictory directions.

Meantime, that or any other act of Anne Boleyn's was superseded by a fatal discovery, which changed utterly the relations of all parties, which in effect acquitted Anne of treason, and which summarily rehabilitated as untainted subjects of the king those five men who had suffered death in the character of traitors. The marriage of Anne to the king, it was

suddenly discovered, had from the beginning been void. It is true that we have long ceased to accredit those objections from precontracts, &c., which in the papal courts would be held to establish a nullity. But we are to proceed by the laws as then settled. Grounds of scruple, which would now raise at most a mere case of irregularity, at that time, unless met *ab initio* by a papal dispensation, did legally constitute a flaw such as even a friendly pope could not effectually cure; far less that angry priest, blazing up with wrath, and at intervals meditating an interdict, who at present occupied the chair of St. Peter. Here was a discovery to make, after so much irreparable injustice had been already perpetrated! If (which is too certain), under the marriage laws then valid, Anne Boleyn never had been the lawful wife of Henry, then, as Bishop Burnet suddenly objected when too late by one hundred and fifty years, what became of the adultery imputed to Anne, and the five young courtiers? Not being the king's wife, both *she* was incapable in law of committing adultery as against the king, and by an inevitable consequence *they* were incapable of participating in a crime which she was incapable of committing.

When was this fatal blunder detected? Evidently before any of the victims had become cold in their graves. And the probability is—that, when the blunder was first perceived, the dreadful consequences of that blunder, and the legal relations of those consequences, were not immediately discerned. What convinces us of this is, that the first impulse of the king and his advisers, upon discovering through a secret communication made by Anne the existence of

a precontract, and the consequent vitiation of her marriage with the king, had been, to charge upon Anne a new and scandalous offence. Not until they had taken time to review the case, did they become aware of the injustice that had been perpetrated by their own precipitance: and as this was past all reparation, probably it was agreed amongst the few who were parties to the fatal oversight, that the safest course was to lock up the secret in darkness. But it is singular to watch the fatality of error which pursued this ill-starred marriage. Every successive critic, in exposing the errors of his predecessor, has himself committed some fresh blunder. Bishop Burnet, for instance, first of all in a Protestant age indicated the bloody mistakes of papal lawyers in 1536; not meaning at all to describe these mistakes as undetected by those who were answerable for them. Though hushed up, they were evidently known to their unhappy authors. Next upon Burnet, down comes Mr. Froude. Burnet had shaped his criticism thus: 'If,' he says, 'the queen was not married to the king, there was no adultery.' Certainly not. But, says Mr. Froude, Burnet forgets that she was condemned for conspiracy and incest, as well as for adultery. Then thirdly come we, and reverting to this charge of forgetfulness upon Burnet, we say, Forgets! but how was he bound to remember? The conspiracy, the incest, the adultery, all alike vanish from the record exactly as the character of wife vanishes from Anne. With any or all of these crimes Henry had no right to intermeddle. They were the crimes of one who never had borne any legal relation to him; crimes, therefore, against her

own conscience, but not against the king in any character that he was himself willing permanently to assume.

On this particular section of Henry's reign, the unhappy episode of his second wife, Mr. Froude has erred by insufficient rigour of justice. Inclined to do more justice than is usually done to the king, and not blind to the dissolute character of Anne, he has yet been carried, by the pity inalienable from the situation, to concede more to the pretences of doubt and suspense than is warranted by the circumstances of the case. Anne Boleyn was too surely guilty up to the height of Messalina's guilt, and far beyond that height in one atrocious instance.

Passing from *that* to the general pretensions of this very eloquent and philosophic book, we desire to say—that Mr. Froude is the first writer (first and sole) who has opened his eyes to comprehend the grandeur of this tremendous reign.

THE ENGLISH IN INDIA.

In now reproducing the three series of notes on the Indian Mutiny written by De Quincey for me in *Titan*, I must advert briefly to the agony of apprehension under which the two earlier chapters were written. I can never forget the intense anxiety with which he studied daily the columns of *The Scotsman* and *The Times*, looking wistfully for tidings from Roorkhee where his daughter Florence was shut up. The father's heart was on the rack until news arrived that the little garrison was saved.

The following paragraph from a letter written to his daughter Emily on Sunday, December 1st, 1857, will give some idea of the tension of that terrible suspense: —

'India.—Up to the last mail but one (or briefly in its Latin form, up to the penultimate mail), I suffered in my nervous system to an extent that (except once, in 1812) had not experimentally been made known to me as a possibility. Every night, oftentimes all night long, I had the same dream—a vision of children, most of them infants, but not all, the *first* rank being girls of five and six years old, who were standing in the air outside, but so as to touch the window; and I heard, or perhaps fancied that I heard, always the same dreadful word *Delhi*, not then

knowing that a word even more dreadful—Cawnpore —was still in arrear. This fierce shake to my nerves caused almost from the beginning a new symptom to expose itself (of which previously I never had the faintest outline), viz. somnambulism; and now every night, to my great alarm, I wake up to find myself at the window, which is sixteen feet from the nearest side of the bed. The horror was unspeakable from the hell-dog Nena or Nana; how if this fiend should get hold of FLORENCE or her baby (now within seventeen days of completing her half year)? What first gave me any relief was a good firm-toned letter, dated *Rourkee,** in the public journals, from which it was plain that *Rourkee* had found itself able to act aggressively.'

DE QUINCEY had reason to be proud of his son-in-law, COLONEL BAIRD SMITH, whose varied and brilliant services, culminating at the siege of Delhi, are written in the pages of Sir JOHN KAYE'S and COLONEL MALLESON'S *History of the Sepoy War.*

On that fateful day at Delhi, when so much hung upon the decision as to whether the British should hold the ground they had won in the first assault, it is not too much to say that 'the splendid obstinacy' of BAIRD SMITH practically saved India.

I throw together a few passages from the thrilling pages where the story is told—sufficient to enable the reader who comes fresh to the subject, to understand what manner of man this gallant engineer was who made his mark on British India.

* * * * * *

* Anglo-Indian authorities seem to spell this word in four different ways.—H.

Rúrki (or Roorkhee) was the head-quarters of the Engineering Science of the country. When the news came of the Delhi massacre, BAIRD SMITH instantly made 'admirable arrangements for the defence of the great engineering depot, in which he took such earnest and loving interest. Officially, he was superintendent of irrigation in the north-western provinces—a most useful functionary, great in all the arts of peace, and with a reputation which any man might be proud to possess. But the man of much science now grew at once into the man of war, and Rúrki became a garrison under his command. Not an hour was lost.'

* * * * * *

His timely express to MAJOR CHARLES REID to bring his men on by the Ganges Canal route instead of by forced marches was an early evidence of his combination of dash and sound judgment. REID said, that it saved the place and the lives of the ladies and children.

From the hour that he made his appearance before Delhi as Chief Engineer, a succession of incidents stand on record which show his skill and courage. On the first occasion of BRIGADIER-GENERAL WILSON consulting him professionally, 'he threw all the earnestness of his nature into a great remonstrance against the project of withdrawal. He told the General that to raise the siege would be fatal to our national interests. 'It is our duty,' he said, 'to retain the grip which we now have upon Delhi, and to hold on like Grim Death until the place is our own.' He argued it ably. WILSON listened, and was convinced.

In that supreme moment at the storming of Delhi, when the repulse of two columns, the heavy losses, and the great strength of the place caused the General to hesitate whether to continue the operations, England had cause to feel thankful for the tenacity and daring of two of her sons :—

'From this fatal determination GENERAL WILSON was saved by the splendid obstinacy of BAIRD SMITH, aided by the soldier-like instincts of NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN. * * * * The General undoubtedly believed that the safety of the army would be compromised by the retention of the positions they had gained. Fortunately, BAIRD SMITH was at his elbow. Appealed to by GENERAL WILSON as to whether he thought it possible for the army to retain the ground they had won, his answer was short and decisive, "We *must* do so!" That was all. But the uncompromising tone, the resolute manner, the authority of the speaker, combined to make it a decision against which there was no appeal. GENERAL WILSON accepted it. * * * * It is not too much to affirm, that a retrograde movement would, for the time, have lost India.'

* * * * * *

In spite of the sufferings attendant on a severe wound, the indomitable spirit of this brave soldier carried him through all trials until India was practically saved. Then, shattered by his many exertions, the breathing time came too late. His career is thus summed up in the following inscription on his tomb in Calcutta Cathedral :—

'COLONEL RICHARD BAIRD SMITH of the Bengal Engineers, Master of the Calcutta Mint, C.B. and

A.D.C. to the Queen, whose career, crowded with brilliant service, cut short at its brightest, was born at Lasswade on the 31st of December, 1818. He went to India in 1836. Already distinguished in the two Sikh wars, his conduct on the outbreak of revolt in 1857 showed what a clear apprehension, a stout heart, and a hopeful spirit could effect with scanty means in crushing disorder. Called to Delhi as chief engineer, his bold and ready judgment, his weighty and tenacious counsels, played a foremost part in securing the success of the siege and England's supremacy. The gathered wisdom of many years spent in administering the irrigation of Upper India, trained him for his crowning service—the survey of the great famine of 1861, the provision of relief, and the suggestions of safeguards against such calamities. Broken by accumulated labours, he died at sea, Dec. 13, 1861, aged scarcely 43 years. At Madras, where his Indian career began, his body awaits the resurrection.'

His great work, the *Report on Italian Irrigation*, published with maps and plans in 1852, remains a monument of his engineering ability. COLONEL BAIRD SMITH also published :—

(1) *Agricultural Resources of the Punjab.* London : 1849. 8vo.

(2) *The Cauvery, Kistnah, and Godavery; being a report on the works constructed on these rivers for the Irrigation of the provinces of Tanjore, Guntoor, Masulipatam, and Rajahmundry, in the Presidency of Madras.* London : 1856. 8vo.

(3) *A Short Account of the Ganges Canal, with a description of some of the Principal Works.* 40 pp. Thomason College Press, Roorkee : 1870. 8vo.—H.

I.

HURRIED NOTICES OF INDIAN AFFAIRS.

(*September*, 1857.)

FROM the foundations of the earth, no case in human action or suffering has occurred which could less need or less tolerate the aid of artificial rhetoric than that tremendous tragedy which now for three months long has been moving over the plains of Hindostan. What in Grecian days were called *aporreta* (απορρητα), things not utterable in human language or to human ears—things ineffable—things to be whispered—things to dream of, not to tell *—these things amongst high-caste Brahmims, and amongst the Rajapoots, or martial race of heroes, have been the common product of the passing hour.† Is this well? Is this a fitting end for the mighty religious system that through countless generations has overshadowed India? Yes, it *is* well: it *is* a fitting end for that man-destroying system, more cruel than the bloody religions of Mexico, which, for the deification of the individual, made hopeless Helots of the multitude. Henceforward CASTE *must* virtually be at an end. Upon *caste* has our Bengal army founded a final treason bloodier and larger than any known to human annals. Now, therefore, mere instincts of self-preservation—mere shame—mere fiery stress of necessity, will compel our East India Directory (or whatsoever power

* 'A sight to dream of, not to tell.'—*Coleridge.*

† Twenty-three and twenty-eight thousand of these two orders we have in our Bengal army.

may now under parliamentary appointment inherit their responsibilities) to proscribe, once and for ever, by steadfast exclusion from all possibility of a martial career—to ruin by *legal* degradation and incapacities, all Hindoo pretensions to places of trust, profit, or public dignity which found themselves upon high caste, as Brahmins or Rajapoots. Yes, it *is* well that the high-*caste* men, who existed only for the general degradation of their own Hindoo race in humbler stations, have themselves severed the links which connected them with the glory (so unmerited for *them*) of a nobler Western nationality. Bought though it is by earthly ruin, by torment, many times by indignities past utterance inflicted upon our dear massacred sisters, and upon their unoffending infants, yet for that very reason we must now maintain the great conquest so obtained. There is no man living so base—no, there is not a felon living amongst us, who could be persuaded to repeat the act of the Grecian leader Agamemnon—namely, to sacrifice his innocent daughter, just entering the portals of life in its most golden stage, on the miserable pretence of winning a *public* benefit; masking a diabolical selfishness by the ostentation of public spirit. Yet if some calamity, or even some atrocity, *had* carried off the innocent creature under circumstances which involved an advantage to her country, or to coming generations, the most loving father might gradually allow himself to draw consolation from the happy consequences of a crime which he would have died to prevent. Even such a mixed necessity of feeling presses upon ourselves at present. From the bloody graves of our dear martyred sisters, scattered over the vast plains

of India, rises a solemn adjuration to the spiritual ear of Him that listens with understanding. Audibly this spiritual voice says: O dear distant England! mighty to save, were it not that in the dreadful hour of our trial thou wert far away, and heardest not the screams of thy dying daughters and of their perishing infants. Behold! for us all is finished! We from our bloody graves, in which all of us are sleeping to the resurrection, send up united prayers to thee, that upon the everlasting memory of our hell-born wrongs, thou, beloved mother, wouldst engraft a counter-memory of everlasting retribution, inflicted upon the Moloch idolatries of India. Upon the pride of *caste* rests for its ultimate root all this towering tragedy, which now hides the very heavens from India. Grant, therefore, O distant, avenging England—grant the sole commensurate return which to us *can* be granted —us women and children that trod the fields of carnage alone—grant to our sufferings the virtue and lasting efficacy of a *lutron* (λυτρον), or ransom paid down on behalf of every creature groaning under the foul idol of caste. Only by the sufferance of England can that idolatry prosper. Thou, therefore, England, when Delhi is swept by the ploughshare and sown with salt, build a solitary monument to us; and on its base inscribe that the last and worst of the murderous idolatries which plagued and persecuted the generations of men was by us abolished; and that by women and children was the pollution of caste cleansed from the earth for ever!

Now let us descend into the circumstantialities of the case, explaining what may have been obscure

to the general reader. By which term *general reader* is meant, that reader who has had no reason for cultivating any acquaintance whatever with India; to whom, therefore, the whole subject is unbroken ground; and who neither knows, nor pretends to know, the merest outline of our British connection with India; what first carried us thither; what accidents of good luck and of imminent peril raised us from a mere commercial to a political standing; how we improved this standing by prodigious energy into the position of a conquering state; prospered rapidly by the opposition which we met; overthrew even our European competitors, of whom the deadliest were the French; pursued a difficult war with an able Mahometan upstart, Hyder Ali—a treacherous and cruel prince; next with his son, Tippoo Sahib, a still more ferocious scoundrel, who, in his second war with us, was settled effectually by one thrust of a bayonet in the hands of an English soldier. This war, and the consequent division of Tippoo's dominions, closed the eighteenth century. About 1817 we undertook the great Mahratta war; the victorious termination of which placed us, after sixty years of struggle, in the supreme rank amongst Indian potentates. All the rest of our power and greatness accrued to us by a natural and spontaneous evolution of consequences, most of which would have followed us as if by some magnetic attraction, had we ourselves been passive. No conquering state was ever yet so mild and beneficent in the spirit of its government, or so free from arrogance in its demeanour. An impression thoroughly false prevails even amongst ourselves, that we have pursued a systematic course of usurpa-

tions, and have displaced all the *ancient* thrones of Hindostan. Unfortunately for this representation, it happens that all the leading princes of India whose power and rank brought them naturally into collision with ourselves, could not be ancient, having been originally official dependants upon the great Tartar prince, whose throne was usually at Agra or Delhi, and whom we called sometimes the Emperor, or the Shah, or more often the *Great Mogul.* During the decay of the Mogul throne throughout the eighteenth century, these dependent princes had, by continual encroachments on the weakness of their sovereign, made themselves independent rulers; but they could not be older than the great Mogul Shah himself, who had first created them. Now the Mogul throne was itself a mere modern creation, owing its birth to Baber, the great-grandson of Tamerlane. But Baber, the eldest of these Tartar princes, synchronised with our English Henry VIII. In reality, there was nothing old in India that could be displaced by us; at least amongst the Mahometan princes. Some ancient Hindoo Rajahs there were in obscure corners, but without splendour of wealth or military distinction; and the charge of usurpation was specially absurd, since we pre-eminently were the king-makers, the king-supporters, the king-pensioners, in Hindostan; and excepting the obscure princes just mentioned, almost every Indian prince, at the time of our opening business in the political line, happened to be a usurper. We ourselves made the Rajah of Oude into a king; we ourselves more than once saved the supreme Shah (*i. e.* the Great Mogul) from military ruin, and for many a year saved *him* and *his* from

the painful condition of insolvency. But all this is said in the way of parenthesis. In another number, a sketch of our Indian Empire, in its growth and early oscillations, may be presented to the reader, specially adapted to the use of those whose reading has not lain in that direction. Now let us return to the great domineering question of the hour—the present tremendous revolt on the part of seventy or eighty thousand men in our Bengal Presidency.

This mutiny we propose to notice briefly but searchingly under three heads—first, in its relation to the mutineers themselves; next, in its relation to ourselves; but, subdividing that question, we will assign the second head to the consideration of its probable bearing on our political credit and reputation; whilst the third head may be usefully given to the consideration of its bearing on our pecuniary interests, and our means of effectual reparation for the ruins left behind by rebellion, and by the frantic spasms of blind destruction.

First, then, let us look for a moment at this great tumultuary movement, as it points more or less obscurely to the ulterior purposes of the mutineers, and the temper in which they pursue those purposes. In a newspaper of Saturday, August 15, we observe the following sentence introductory to a most unsatisfactory discussion of the Indian revolt:—'The mutiny in India, from the uninterrupted nature of its progress, and its rapid spread through every considerable station, shows a power of combination and determination which has never before been given credit for to the native Indian mind.' This passage is cited by us, not for anything plausible in its views, but for

the singular felicity of contradiction which fortunately it offers to every indication of the true disposable ability that is now, or ever has been, at the service of the insurgents. This, indeed, is rapidly becoming of very subordinate importance; since the ablest rebel, without an army, must be contemptible enough. But with a view to the larger question—What quality of opposition is ever likely to be brought into play against us, not in merely military displays, but in the secret organisation of plots and local tumults, propagated over extensive provinces? Some degree of anxiety is reasonable under any possible condition of the army; and this being so, it is satisfactory to observe, now in 1857, the same childishness and defect of plan and coherent purpose as have ever characterised the oriental mind. No foresight has been exhibited; no concert between remote points; no preparation; no tendency towards combined action. And, on the other hand, it is most justly noticed by a new London paper, of the same date—namely, the *People*—that it is perfectly dazzling to the mind to review over the whole face of India, under almost universal desertion, the attitude of erectness and preparation assumed by the scattered parties of our noble countrymen—'everywhere' (says the *People*) 'driven to bay, and everywhere turning upon and scattering all assailants. From all parts is the same tale. No matter how small the amount of the British force may be, if it were but a captain's company, it holds its own.' On the other hand, what single success have the rebels achieved? Most valiant, no doubt, they have shown themselves in hacking to pieces poor fugitive women, most intrepid in charging a column

of infants. Else, what have they to show? Delhi is the solitary post which they have for the moment secured; but even that through the incomprehensible failure of the authorities at Meerut, and not through any vigour manifested by themselves. Any uneasiness which still possesses the minds of close observers fastens upon these two points—first, upon the disarmings, as distinguished from the desertions; secondly, upon the amount, and probable equipment, and supposed route of stragglers. It is now said that the mutiny has burned itself out from mere defect of fuel; there *can* be no more revolts of sepoys, seeing that no sepoys now remain to revolt; that is, of the Bengal force. But in this general statement a great distinction is neglected. Regiments once disarmed, if also *stripped of their private arms*, whether deserters or not, are of slight account; but the grave question is this—how many of (say seventy) regiments have gone off *previously* to the disarming. Even in that case, the most favourable for *them* where arms are secured, it is true that ammunition will very soon fail them; but still their bayonets will be available; and we believe that the East India infantry carry swords. A second anxiety connects itself with the vast number of vagrant marauding soldiers, having power to unite, and to assail small detached stations or private bungalows. Yet, again, in cases known specially to ourselves, the inhabitants of such small insulated stations had rapidly fortified the buildings best fitted for defence. Already, by the 18th of May, in a station not far from Delhi, this had been effected; every native servant, male or female, had been discharged instantly; and perhaps they would

be able to strengthen themselves with artillery. The horrors also of the early murders at Delhi would be likely to operate beneficially, by preventing what otherwise is sure to happen—namely, the disposition to relax in vigilance as first impressions wear off. Considering, upon the whole, the amount of regiments that may be assumed as absolutely disarmed and neutralised; and, on the other hand, counting the 5000 and upwards of troops intercepted on their route to Hong-Kong, and adding these to at least 25,000 of Queen's troops previously in the country, counting also the faithful section of the Sikhs, the Ghoorkas, and others that could be relied on, the upshot must be, that at least 40,000 troops of the best quality are scattered between the Hoogly and the Sutlege (or, in other words, between Calcutta and Loodiana *). Beyond a few casual outrages on some small scale, we hope that no more of bloody tragedies can be *now* (August 25) apprehended. But we, that have dear friends in Bengal, must, for weeks to come, feel restless and anxious. Still, this is a great mitigation of the horror that besieged our anticipations six weeks ago.

But, having thrown a glance at the shifting aspects of the danger, now let us alight for a moment on the cause of this dreadful outbreak. We have no separate information upon this part of the subject, but we have the results of our own vigilant observations upon

* '*Loodiana:*'—The very last station in Bengal, on going westwards to the Indus. In Runjeet Singh's time this was for many years the station at which we lodged our Affghan pensioner, the Shah Soojah—too happy, had he never left his Loodiana lodgings.

laying this and that together; and so much we will communicate. From the first, we have rejected incredulously the immoderate effects ascribed to the greased cartridges; and not one rational syllable is there in the pretended rumours about Christianising the army. Not only is it impossible that folly so gross should maintain itself against the unremitting evidence of facts, all tending in the opposite direction; but, moreover, under any such idle solution as this, there would still remain another point unaccounted for, and *that* is the frantic hatred borne towards ourselves by many of the rebellious troops. Some of our hollow friends in France, Belgium, &c., profess to read in this hatred an undeniable inference that we must have treated the sepoys harshly, else how explain an animosity so deadly. To that argument we have a very brief answer, such as seems decisive. The Bengalese sepoy,* when most of all pressed for some rational explanation of his fury, never once thought of *this* complaint; besides which, it is too notorious that our fault has always lain the other way. Heavily criminal, in fact, we had been by our lax discipline; and in particular, the following most scandalous

* For the sake of readers totally unacquainted with the subject, it may be as well to make an explanation or two. The East India regiments generally run to pretty high numbers—1000 or 1200. The *high* commissioned officers, as the captain, lieutenant, &c., are always British; but the *non-commissioned* officers are always native Hindoos—that is, sepoys. For instance, the *naïk*, or corporal; the *havildar*, or serjeant:—even of the *commissioned* officers, the *lowest* are unavoidably native, on account of the native private. Note that *sepoy*, as colloquially it is called, but *sipahee*, as in books it is often written, does not mean Hindoo or Hindoo soldier, but is simply the Hindoo word for *soldier*.

breach of discipline must have been silently connived at for years by British authorities. Amongst the outward forms of respect between man and man, there is none that has so indifferently belonged to all nations, as the act of rising from a sedentary posture for the purpose of expressing respect. Most other forms of respect have varied with time and with place. The ancient Romans, for instance, never bowed; and amongst orientals, you are thought to offer an insult if you uncover your head. In this little England of ours, who could fancy two stout men curtseying to each other? Yet this they did, and so recently as in Shakspere's days. To use his words, they 'crook'd the pregnant hinges of the knee.' Sometimes they curtseyed with the right knee singly, sometimes with both, as did Romeo to the fiery Tybalt. Many and rapid, therefore, were the changes in ceremonial forms, at least with us, the changeable men of Christendom; else how could it happen that, two hundred and fifty years back, men of rank in England should have saluted each other by forms that now would be thought to indicate lunacy? And yet, violent as the spirit of change might otherwise be, one thing never changed—the expression of respect between man and man by rising from their seats.

'Utque viro sancto *chorus assurrexerit* omnis'

is a record belonging to the eldest of days; and that it belonged not to the eldest times only, but also to the highest rank, is involved in a memorable anecdote from the last days of Julius Cæsar. He, the mighty dictator—

'Yes, he, the foremost man of all this world'—

actually owed his assassination under the representation, to the burning resentment of his supposed aristocratic manner in a prime neglect of this very form. A deputation of citizens, on a matter of business, had found him seated, and to their immeasurable disgust, he had made no effort even to rise. His friends excused him on the allegation, whether true or not, that at the moment he was physically incapacitated from rising by a distressing infirmity. It might be so: as Shakspere elsewhere observes, the black silk patch knows best whether there is a wound underneath it. But, if it were not so, then the imperial man paid the full penalty of his offence, supposing the rancorous remembrance of that one neglect were truly and indeed what armed the Ides of March against his life. But, were this story as apocryphal as the legends of our nurseries, still the bare possibility that 'the laurelled majesty'* of that mighty brow should have been laid low by one frailty of this particular description—this possibility recalls us clamorously to the treasonable character of such an insolence, when practised systematically for the last eighteen months by a Pagan hound, by a sepoy from Lucknow or Benares, towards his British commanding officer. Shall it have been possible that the founder of the Roman empire died for having ignored the decencies of human courtesy, perhaps through momentary inattention, by wandering of thoughts, or by that collapse of energy which some-

* '*The laurelled majesty*,' &c. :—A flying reference to a grand expression *majestas laurea frontis*—which occurs in a Latin supplement to the *Pharsalia* by May, an English poet, contemporary with the latter days of Shakspere.

times steps between our earnest intentions and their fulfilment—this man, so august, shall he have expiated by a bloody death one fleeting moment of forgetfulness? and yet, on the other hand, under our Indian government, the lowest of our servants, a mass of carrion from a brotherhood of Thugs, shall have had free license to insult the leaders of the army which finds bread for him and his kindred? That the reader may understand what it is that we are talking of—not very long ago, in one of the courts-martial occasioned by some explosions of tentative insubordination preliminary to the grand revolt, a British officer, holding the rank of lieutenant, made known to the court, that through the last twelve or eighteen months he had been struck and shocked by one alarming phenomenon within the cantonments of the sepoys: formerly, on his entering the lines, the men had risen respectfully from their seats as he walked along; but since 1854, or thereabouts, they had insolently looked him in the face, whilst doggedly retaining their seats. Now this was a punishable breach of discipline, which in our navy *would* be punished without fail. Even a little middy, fresh from the arms of his sisters or his nurse, and who does not bear any royal commission, as an ensign or cornet in the army, is thus supported in the performance of his duty, and made respectable in the eyes of his men, though checked in all explosions of childish petulance—even to this child, as an officer in command, respect is exacted; and on the finest arena of discipline ever exhibited to the world, it is habitually felt that from open disrespect to the ruin of all discipline the steps of descent are rapid. This

[illegible] remembrance of [illegible] the whole result. [illegible] regarding itself [illegible] those [illegible] months. [illegible]

[illegible] materials [illegible] in the [illegible] leads [illegible] explana- [illegible] Meantime, [illegible] point the [illegible] important [illegible] in relation [illegible] the Bengal [illegible] Company shall [illegible] millions of [illegible] of [illegible] have [illegible] is much more important [illegible] in coming years. [illegible] Secondly, this [illegible] of plunder must have [illegible] the [illegible] interest in a variety of ways. It must have changed the other-wise free motions of the rebels; must have given multiplied temptations to desertion; must have in-stilled jealousies of each other, and want of cordial co-operation in regard to the current plans, and sometimes murderous animosities in regard to past

transactions—divisions of spoil, or personal competitions. Thus far, if nothing had been concerned more precious than money, it is by no means clear that the *public* service (as distinct from the interest of private individuals, whose property has been destroyed) will be found to have very seriously suffered.

The other head, which concerns the probable relation of this astonishing revolt to the wisdom of our late Indian administration, finds us, for the present, enveloped in a mystery the most impenetrable that history, in any of its darkest chapters, has offered. We have a war on foot with Southern China, or rather with Canton; and what may be the Chinese object in that war, is hitherto an impenetrable mystery. But darker and more unfathomable is the mystery which invests the sepoy insurrection. Besides the notorious fact that no grievances, the very slightest, have been alleged, it must also be remembered that we first and solely made a provision for the invalided and for the superannuated soldier—a thing unheard of throughout Asia. And this golden reversion, the poor infatuated savages have *wilfully* renounced! The sole *sure* result, from this most suicidal of revolts, is—that unpitied myriads of sepoys will be bayonetted, thousands will be hanged, and nearly all will lose their pensions.

II.

PASSING NOTICES OF INDIAN AFFAIRS.

(*October*, 1857.)

AN English historian—one amongst many—of our British India, having never happened to visit any part of that vast region, nor, indeed, any part of the East, founded upon that accident a claim to a very favourable distinction. It was, Mr. Mill argued, desirable—it was a splendid advantage—NOT to have seen India. This advantage he singly, amongst a crowd of coming rivals and precursors, might modestly plead; and to that extent he pretended to a precedency amongst all his competitors.

The whole claim, and the arguments which supported it, wore the aspect of a paradox; and a paradox it certainly was—but not, therefore, a falsehood. A paradox, as I have many times explained, or proposition contradicting the *doxa* or public opinion, not only may be true, but often has been the leading truth in capital struggles of opinion. Not only the true doctrine, but also, in some branches of science, the very fundamental doctrine, that which at this day furnishes a foundation to all the rest, originally came forward as a violent and revolting paradox.* It is

* This truth, for the sake of making it more impressive, I threw long ago into this antithetic form; and I will not scruple, out of any fear that I may be reproached with repeating myself, to place it once again on record:—'Not *that* only is strictly a paradox, which, being false, is popularly regarded as true;' but that also, and in a prodigiously greater extent, which, being true, is popularly regarded as false.

possible enough, therefore, that the Indian historiographer may have been right, and not merely speciously ingenious. It is something of a parallel case, which we may all have known through the candid admissions of the Duke of Wellington, that the battle of Waterloo might by possibility have been reported as satisfactorily, on the 18th of June, 1815, from the centre of London smoke, as from the centre of that Belgian smoke which sat in heavy clouds throughout the day upon the field of battle. Now and then, it is true, these Belgian clouds drew up in solemn draperies, and revealed the great tragic spectacle lying behind them for a brief interval. But they closed up again, and what the spectator saw through these fugitive openings would have availed him little indeed, unless in so far as it was extended and interpreted by *information* issuing from the British staff. But this information would have been not less material and effectual towards a history of the mighty battle, if furnished to a man sitting in a London drawing-room, than if furnished to a reporter watching as an eye-witness at Hougoumont.

This one Waterloo illustration, if thoughtfully applied, might yield a justification for the paradoxical historian. Much more, therefore, might it yield a justification for us at home, who, sitting at ten thousand miles' distance, take upon us to better the Indian reports written on the spot, to correct their errors of haste, or to improve them by showing the inferences which they authorise. We, who write upon the awful scenes of India at far-distant stations, do not so truly enjoy *unequal* advantages, as we enjoy varying and *dissimilar* advantages.

According to the old proverb the bystander sees more of the game than those who share the enmity in its passions. And assuredly, if it were asked what it is that we who write upon Indian news aspire to effect, I may reply frankly, that, if but by a single suggestion any one of us should add something to the illumination of the great sepoy conspiracy—whether as to its ultimate purpose, or as to its machinery, or as to its waning hopes, or if but by the merest trifle any one of us should take away something from the load of anxious terrors haunting the minds of all who have relations in India—that man will have earned his right to occupy the public ear. For my own part, I will not lose myself at present, when so much darkness prevails on many leading questions, in any views too large and theoretic for our present condition of light. And that I may not be tempted into doing so, I will proceed without regard to any systematic order, taking up, exactly as chance or preponderant interest may offer them, any urgent questions of the hour, before the progress of events may antiquate them, or time may exhale their flavour. This desultory and moody want of order has its attractions for many a state of nervous distraction. Every tenth reader may happen to share in the distraction, so far as it has an Indian origin. The same deadly anxiety on behalf of female relatives, separated from their male protectors in the centre of a howling wilderness, now dedicated as an altar to the dark Hindoo goddess of murder, may, in the reader also, as well as in the writer on Indian news, periodically be called on to submit to the insurmountable aggravation of delay. In such a case, what is

good for one may be good for another. The same inexpressible terrors, so long as Nena Sahibs and other miscreant sons of hell are roaming through the infinite darkness, may prompt the same fretfulness of spirit; the same deadly irritation and restlessness, which cannot but sharpen the vision of fear, will sharpen also that of watching hope, and will continually read elements of consolation or trust in that which to the uninterested eye offers only a barren blank.

EUROPEANS.

I am not sorry that the first topic, which chance brings uppermost, is one which overflows with the wrath of inexhaustible disgust. What fiend of foolishness has suggested to our absurd kinsmen in the East, through the last sixty years, to generalise themselves under the name of *Europeans?* As if they were ashamed of their British connections, and precisely at that moment when they are leaving England, they begin to assume continental airs; when bidding farewell to Europe, they begin to style themselves *Europeans*, as if it were a greater thing to take up a visionary connection with the Continent, than to found a true and indestructible nobility upon their relationship to the one immortal island of this planet. There is no known spot of earth which has exerted upon the rest of the planet one-thousandth part of the influence which this noble island has exercised over the human race—exercised through the noblest organs; and yet, behold! these coxcombs of our own blood have no sooner landed on Indian soil, than they are anxious to disclaim the connection.

Such at least is the *apparent* construction of their usage. But mark the illogical consequences which follow. A noble British regiment suddenly, and for no rational purpose, receives a new baptism, and becomes a European regiment. The apologist for this folly will say, that a British regiment does not necessarily exclude Germans, for instance. But I answer that it *does*. The British Government have, during this very month of September, 1857, declared at Frankfort (in answer to obstinate applications from puppies who fancy that we cannot tame our rebels without *their* assistance), '*that the British army, by its constitution, does not admit foreigners.*' But suppose that accidents of aristocratic patronage have now and then privately introduced a few Germans or Swedes into a very few regiments, surely this accident, improbable already, was not *more* probable when the regiment was going away for twenty years (the old term of expatriation) to a half-year's distance from the Rhine and the Danube. The Germanism of the regiment might altogether evaporate in the East, but could not possibly increase. Next, observe this; if we must lose our nationality, and transmute ourselves into Europeans, for the very admirable reason that we were going away to climates far remote from Germany, then, at least, we ought not to call our native troops *sepoys*, but *Asiatics*. In this way only will there be any logical parity of antithesis. Scripturally, we are the children of Japheth; and, as all Asiatics are the sons of Shem, then we shall be able to mortify their conceit, by calling to their knowledge our biblical prophecy, that the sons of Japheth shall sit down in the tents of

Shem. But, thirdly, even thus we should find ourselves in a dismal chaos of incoherencies; for what is to become of 'Jack'? Must our sailors be re-baptised? Must Jack also be a *European?* Think of Admiral Seymour reporting to the Admiralty as a leader of Europeans! and exulting in having circumvented Yeh by Her Majesty's European crews! And then, lastly, come the Marines: must they also qualify for children of Europe? Was there ever such outrageous folly? One is sure, in the fine picturesque words of Chaucer, that, 'for very filth and shame,' neither admiral nor the youngest middy would disgrace himself by such ridiculous finery from the rag-fair of cosmopolitan swindling. The real origin of so savage an absurdity is this:—Amongst the commercial bodies of the three presidencies in all the leading cities, it became a matter of difficulty often to describe special individuals in any way legally operative. Your wish was to distinguish him from the native merchant or banker; but to do this by calling him a British merchant, &c., was possibly not true, and legally, therefore, not safe. He might be a Dane, a Russian, or a Frenchman; he was described, therefore, in a more generalising way, as a European. But a case so narrow as *that*—a case for pawnbrokers and old clothesmen—ought not to regulate the usage of great nations. Grand and spirit-stirring (especially in a land far *distant* from home) are the recollections of towns or provinces connected with men's nativities. And poisonous to all such ancestral inspirations are the rascally devices of shroffs and money-changers.

DELHI.

That man—I suppose we are all agreed—who commanded in Meerut on Sunday the tenth day of May, in the year of Christ one thousand eight hundred and fifty-seven, a day which will furnish an epoch for ever to the records of civilisation—that man who *could* have stopped the bloody kennel of hounds, but did *not*, racing in full cry to the homes of our unsuspecting brothers and sisters in Delhi—it were good for that man if he had not been born. He had notice such as might have wakened the dead early in the afternoon (2 or 3 o'clock P.M., I believe), and yet, at the end of a long summer day, torchlight found him barely putting his foot into the stirrup. And why into the stirrup at all? For what end, on what pretence, should he ever have played out the ridiculous pantomime and mockery of causing the cavalry to mount? Two missions there were to execute on that fatal night—first, to save our noble brothers and sisters at Delhi from a ruin that was destined to be total; secondly, to inflict instant and critical retribution upon those who had already opened the carnival of outrage, before they left Meerut. Oh, heaven and earth! heart so timid was there in all this world, sense of wrong so callous, as not to leap with frenzy of joy at so sublime a summons to wield the most impassioned functions of Providence—namely, hell-born destroyers to destroy in the very instant of their fancied triumph, and suffering innocence to raise from the dust in the very crisis of its last despairing prostration. Reader! it

is not exaggeration—many a heart will bear witness in silence that it is *not*—if I should say that men exist, who would gladly pay down thirty years of life in exchange for powers so heavenly for redressing earthly wrongs. To the infamous torpor on that occasion, and the neglect of the fleeting hour that struck the signal for delivery and vengeance, are due many hundreds of the piteous outrages that have since polluted Bengal. Do I mean that, if the rebel capture of Delhi had been prevented, no subsequent outrages would have followed? By no means. Other horrors would have been perpetrated; but that first and greatest (always excepting the case of Cawnpore) would by all likelihood have been intercepted.*

But perhaps his military means were inadequate to the crisis? He had duties to Meerut, not less than duties of vengeance and of sudden deliverance for Delhi. True: he had so; and he had means for meeting all these duties. He had a well-mounted establishment of military force, duly organized in all its arms. Three-and-twenty hundreds he had of British, suitably proportioned as to infantry, cavalry, and artillery—a little army that would have faced anything that Delhi could at that time have put forward. Grant that Delhi could have mustered 5000

* Here observe there were 2300 admirable British troops, and about 700 men of the mutineers, who might then have been attacked at a great advantage, whilst dispersed on errands of devastation. Contrast with these proportions the heroic exertions of the noble Havelock—fighting battle after battle, with perhaps never more than 1700 or 1800 British troops, and having scarcely a gun but what he captured from the enemy. And what were the numbers of his enemy? Five thousand in the earlier actions, and 10,000 to 12,000 in the last.

men: these are three propositions having no doubtful bearing upon such a fact:—

1. That cheerfully would this little British force have faced any Asiatic force of 5000 men, which, indeed, it can hardly be necessary to say, in the face of so large and so transcendent an experience.

2. That the Delhi force could have reached the amount supposed of 5000 only after a junction with the Meerut mutineers; which junction it was the main business of the Meerut commander to intercept.

3. That this computation assumes also the whole of the Delhi garrison to be well affected to the mutineers; an assumption altogether unwarrantable on the *outside* of Delhi during the 10th and 11th of May.

Such were (1) the *motives* of the commander at Meerut towards a noble and energetic resolution; such were (2) his *means*.*

Thinking of that vile *lacheté*, which surrendered,

* Mr. D. B. Jones comes forward to defend the commandant of Meerut. How? The last sentence only of his letter has any sort of reference to the public accusation; and this sentence replies, but not with *any* mode of argument (sound or unsound), to a charge perfectly irrelevant, if it had ever existed—namely, an imaginary charge against the little army assembled on May 10 at Meerut. The short and summary answer is, that no such imaginary charge, pure and absolute moonshine, was ever advanced against the gallant force at Meerut.

Secondly, if it had, such a charge could have no bearing whatever upon that charge, loudly preferred against the commander of that district.

Thirdly, the charge has been (I presume) settled as regards its truth, and any grounds of disputation, this way or that, by the Governor-General. The newspapers have told us, and have not been contradicted, that Lord Canning has dismissed this functionary for '*supineness*.'

with a girl's tameness, absolutely suffered to lapse, without effort, and as if a bauble, this great arsenal and magazine into the hands of the revolters, involuntarily we have regarded it all along as a deadly misfortune; and, upon each periodic mail, the whole nation has received the news of its non-capture as a capital disappointment.

But, on steadier consideration, apparently all this must be regarded as a very great error. Not that it could be any error to have wished for any course of events involving the safety of our poor slaughtered compatriots. That event would have been cheap at *any* price. But that dismal catastrophe *having* happened, to intercept that bitter wo having been already ripened into an impossibility by the 11th and 12th of May, seven-and-forty days before our thoughts at home began to settle upon India, thenceforwards it became a very great advantage—a supreme advantage —that Delhi should have been occupied by the mutineers. Briefly, then, why?

First of all, because this movement shut up within one ring fence the *élite* of the rebels (according to some calculations, at least three-and-twenty thousand of well-armed and well-disciplined men), that would otherwise have been roaming over the whole face of Bengal as marauders and murderers. These men, left to follow their own vagrant instincts, would, it is true, in some not inconsiderable proportion, have fallen victims to those fierce reactions of rustic vengeance which their own atrocities would very soon have provoked. But large concentrated masses would still have survived in a condition rapidly disposable as auxiliary bodies to all those towns invested by

circumstances with a partisan interest, such as Lucknow, Benares, Cawnpore, Agra, Gwalior, and Allahabad.

Secondly, Delhi it was that opened the horrors of retribution; mark what chastisement it was that alighted from the very first upon all the scoundrels who sought, and fancied they could not fail to find, an asylum in Delhi. It is probable that hardly one in twenty of the mutineers came to Delhi without plunder; and for strong reasons this plunder would [illegible] assume the shape of heavy metallic money. For the public treasuries in almost every station were rifled; and unhappily for the comfort of the robbers under the Bengal sun of June and July, very much of the East Indian money lies in silver—namely, rupees, of which, in the last generation, eight were sufficient to make an English pound; but at present ten are required by the evil destiny of sepoys. Everybody has read an anecdote of the painter Correggio, that, upon finishing a picture for some monastery, the malicious monks paid him for it in copper. The day of payment was hot, and poor Correggio was overweighted; he lay down under his copper affliction; and whether he died or not, is more than I remember. But doubtless to the curious in Correggiosity Pilkington will tell. For the sepoys, although their affliction took the shape of silver, and not of copper, virtually it was not less, considering the far more blazing sun. Mephistopheles might have arranged the whole affair. One could almost hear him whispering to each separate sepoy, as he stood amongst the treasury burglars, the reflection that those *pensions*, which the kind and munificent English

Government granted to their old age or their infirmities, all over India, raising up memorial trophies of public gratitude or enlightened pity, never more would be heard of. All had perished, the justice that gave, the humble merit that received, the dutiful behaviour that hoped; and henceforwards of them and of their names, as after the earliest of rebellions, in the book of life 'was no remembrance.'

Under these miserable thoughts the vast majority of the sepoys robbed largely, as opportunities continually opened upon them. Then, and chiefly *through* their robberies, commenced their chastisement in good earnest. Every soldier by every comrade was viewed with hatred and suspicion; by the common labourer with the scrutiny of deep self-interest. The popular report of their sudden wealth travelled rapidly; every road, village, house, whether ahead or on their flanks, became a place of distrust and anxious jealousy; and Delhi seemed to offer the only safe asylum. Thither, as to a consecrated sanctuary, all hurried; and their first introduction to the duties of the new home they had adopted, would be a harsh and insolent summons to the chances of a desperate *sortie* against men in whose presence their very souls sank. On reviewing the circumstances which *must* have surrounded this Delhi life, probably no nearer resemblance to a hell of apostate spirits has ever existed. Money, carried in weighty parcels of coin, cannot be concealed. Swathed about the person, it disfigures the natural symmetries of the figure. The dilemma, therefore, in which every individual traitor stood was, that, if he escaped a special notice from every eye, this must have been because all his crimes

had failed to bring him even a momentary gain. Having no money, he had no swollen trousers. For ever he had forfeited the pension that was the pledge of comfort and respectability to his family and his own old age. This he had sacrificed, in exchange for nothing at all. But, on the other hand, if his robberies had been very productive and prosperous, in that proportion he became advertised to every eye, indicated and betrayed past all concealment to every ruffian less fortunate as a pillager. Delhi must in several points have ripened his troubles, and showed them on a magnifying disk. To have no confidential friend, or adviser, or depositary of a secret, is an inevitable evil amongst a population constitutionally treacherous. But now in Delhi this torment takes a more fearful shape. Every fifth or sixth day, when he is sternly ordered out upon his turn of duty, what shall he do with his money? He has by possibility 40 lbs. weight of silver, each pound worth about three guineas. In the very improbable case of his escaping the gallows, since the British Government will endeavour to put the whole monstrous crew that have one and all broken the *sacramentum militare*, for which scourging with rods and subsequent strangulation is the inevitable penalty, what will remain to his poor family? His cottage, that once had been his pride, will now betray him, as soon as ever movable columns are formed, and horse-patrols begin to inspect the roads. But, as to his money, in nineteen cases out of twenty, he will find himself obliged to throw it away in his flight, and will then find that through three months of intolerable suffering he has only been acting as steward for some British soldier.

The private letters and the local newspapers from many parts of India having now come in, it is possible through the fearful confusion to read some facts that would cause despair, were it not for two remembrances: first, what nation it is that supports the struggle; secondly, that of the six weeks immediately succeeding to the 10th of September, no two days, no period of forty-eight hours, *can* pass without continued successions of reinforcements reaching Calcutta. It should be known that even the worst sailers among the transports—namely, exactly those which were despatched from England through the course of *July* (not of August)—are all under contract to perform the voyage in seventy days; whereas many a calculation has proceeded on the old rate of ninety days. The small detachments of two and three hundreds, despatched on every successive day of July, are already arriving at their destination; and the August detachments, generally much stronger (800 or 900), all sailed in powerful steamers. Lord Elgin arrived at Calcutta in time to be reported by this mail, with marines (300) and others (300), most seasonably to meet the dangers and uproars of the great Mahometan festival. The bad tidings are chiefly these:—

1. The failure of a night-attack upon the Dinapore mutineers by detachments from two of our British regiments, with a loss of '200 *killed*'; in which, however, there *must* be a mistake; for the total number of our attacking party was only 300. On the other hand, there may have been some call for a consciously desperate effort; and the enemy, having two regiments, would muster, probably, very nearly 2000 men; for the sepoy regiments are always strong in

numbers, and these particular regiments had not suffered.

2. Much more ominous than these reports, is an estimate of our main force before Delhi at less than 2000 men. This, unhappily, is not intrinsically improbable. The force was, by many persons, never reckoned at more than 6000 or 7000 men; and this, when reduced by three-and-twenty conflicts (perhaps more), in which the enemy had the advantage of artillery more powerful than ours, and (what is worse) of trained artillerymen more numerous, might too naturally come down to the small number stated.

3. The doubtful condition of Lucknow, Benares, and Agra comes in the rear of all this to strike a frost into the heart, or would do so, again I say, if any other nation were concerned.

4. Worse still, because reluctantly unfolding facts that had previously been known and kept back, is the state of Bombay. When retreats on board the shipping are contemplated, or at least talked of, the mere insulated case of Kolapore becomes insignificant.

5. I read a depressing record in the very quarter whence all our hopes arise. In summing up the particular transports throughout July whose destination was Calcutta, I find that the total of troops ordered to that port in the thirty-one days of July was just 6500, and no more. Every place was rapidly becoming of secondary importance in comparison of the area stretching with a radius of 150 miles in every direction from the centre of Allahabad. And the one capital danger is too clearly this—that, being unable to throw in *overwhelming* succours, those inadequate succours, matched against the countless

resources of Hindoo vagrant ruffianism, may, at the utmost, enable us to keep a lingering hold, whilst endless successions of incomparably gallant men fall before our own rifles, our own guns, and that discipline of a cowardly race which we ourselves have taught. We are true to ourselves, and ever shall be so: that is a rock to build upon. Yet, if it should appear by January next that no deep impression has then been made upon revolting India, it will probably appear the best course to send no more rivulets of aid; but to *combine* measures energetically with every colony or outpost of the empire; to call up even the marines and such sections of our naval forces as have often co-operated with the land forces (in the Chinese war especially); and to do all this with a perfect disregard of money. Lord Palmerston explained very sufficiently why it is that any powerful squadrons of ships, which would else have rendered such overwhelming succour against the towns along the line of the Ganges and Jumna, were unhappily disqualified for action, by the shallows and sand-banks on those great rivers. But this apology does not stand good as regards flotillas of gunboats or rafts with a very light draught of water; still less as regards the seamen and marines.

I conclude with these notices—too painfully entitled to some attention. Would to heaven they were *not!*

1. Calcutta itself is not by any means in a state of *security*, either in the English sense of that word (namely, freedom from danger), or in its old Latin sense of freedom from the *anxieties* of danger. All depends upon the prosperity of our affairs at Delhi, Lucknow, Agra, Cawnpore, and Allahabad. The

possibility of a fanatical explosion, such as that which occurred recently at Patna, shows the inefficiency of our precautions and pretended police. I believe that the *native* associations formed in Calcutta will be of little use. Either the members will be sleeping at the moment of outbreak, or will be separated from their arms. We are noble in our carelessness; our enemy is base, but his baseness, always in alliance with cunning and vigilance, tells cruelly against us.

2. It may be feared that the Governor-General has in the following point lamentably neglected a great duty of his place. It must have been remarked with astonishment, as a matter almost inexplicable, how it has arisen that so many gallant men, at the head of every regiment, should have suffered themselves to be slaughtered like sheep in a butcher's shambles. Surely five-and-twenty or thirty men, in youthful vigour, many of them capital shots, could easily have shot down 150 of the cowardly sepoys. So much work they could have finished with their revolvers. More than one amongst the ladies, in this hideous struggle, have shot down their two brace of black scoundrels apiece. But the officers, having the advantage of swords, would have accounted for a few score more. Why, then, have they not done this?—an act of energy so natural to our countrymen when thus roused to unforgiving vengeance. Simply because they have held themselves most nobly, and in defiance of their own individual interest, to be under engagements of fidelity to the Company, and obligations of forbearance to the dogs whom they commanded, up to the last moment of possible doubt. Now, from these engagements of honour the Governor-General

should, by one universal act (applicable to the three Presidencies) have absolved them. For it cannot be alleged *now* for an instant, that perhaps the regiments might mean to continue faithful. If they *do* mean this, no harm will come to any party from the official dispensing order; the sepoys could suffer by it only in the case of treachery. And, in the meantime, there has emerged amongst them a new policy of treason, which requires of us to assume, in mere self-defence, that *all* sepoys are meditating treason. It is this: they now reserve their final treason until the critical moment of action in the very crisis of battle. Ordered to charge the revolters, they discharge their carbines over their heads; or, if infantry, they blaze away with blank cartridge. This policy has been played off already eight or nine times; and by one time, as it happens, too many; for it was tried upon the stern Havelock, who took away both horses and carbines from the offenders. Too late it is *now* for Bengal to baffle this sharper's trick. But Bombay and Madras, should *their* turn come after all, might profit by the experience.

3. For years it has been our nursery bugbear, to apprehend a Russian invasion on the Indus. This, by testimony from every quarter (the last being that of Sir Roderick Murchison, who had travelled over most of the ground), is an infinitely impossible chimera; or at least until the Russians have colonized Khiva and Bokhara. Meantime, to those who have suffered anxiety from such an anticipation, let me suggest one consolation at least amongst the many horrors of the present scenes in Bengal—namely, that this perfidy of our troops was not displayed first in the very

agony of conflict with Russia, or some more probable invader.

4. A dismal suggestion arises from the present condition of Bengal, which possibly it is too late now to regard as a warning. Ravaged by bands of marauders, no village safe from incursion, the usual culture of the soil must have been dangerously interrupted. Next, therefore, comes FAMINE (and note that the famines of India have been always excessive, from want of adequate carriage), and in the train of famine, inaudibly but surely, comes cholera; and then, perhaps, the guiltiest of races will pay down an expiation at which centuries will tremble. For in the grave of famishing nations treason languishes; the murderer has no escape; and the infant with its mother sleeps at last in peace.

P.S.—The following memoranda, more or less connected with points noticed in the preceding paper, but received later, seem to merit attention:—

1. As to the strength of our army before Delhi, it seems, from better accounts, to be hardly less than 5000 men, of which one-half are British infantry; and the besieged seem, by the closest inquiries, to reach at the least 22,000 men.

2. Colonel Edwardes, so well known in connection with Moultan, has published an important fact—namely, that the sepoys *did* rely, in a very great degree, upon the whole country rising, and that their disappointment and despair are consequently proportionable.

3. A great question arises—How it was possible for the sepoys—unquestionably not harbouring the

smallest ill-will to the British—suddenly and almost universally to assail them with atrocities arguing the greatest. Even their own countrymen, with all their childish credulity, would not be made to believe that they really hated people with whom they had never had any but the kindest and most indulgent intercourse. I should imagine that the solution must de sought in two facts—first, in the deadly ennui and *tædium* of sepoy life, which disposes them to catch maniacally at any opening for furious excitement; but, secondly, in the wish to forward the ends of the conspiracy under Mahometan misleading. Hence, in particular, the cruelties practised on women and children: for they argued that, though the British *men* would face anything in their own persons before they would relax their hold on India, they would yet be appalled by the miseries of their female partners and children.

4. It is most unfair, undoubtedly, to attack any man in our present imperfect state of information. But some neglects are unsusceptible of after excuse. One I have noticed, which cannot be denied or varnished, in Lord Canning. Another is this:—Had he offered 10,000 rupees (£1000 sterling) for the head of Nena Sahib, he would have got it in ten days, besides inflicting misery on the hell-kite.

III.

SUGGESTIONS UPON THE SECRECY OF THE MUTINY.

(January, 1858.)

THE first question arises upon the true originating *proximate* and immediate, of the mutiny—who are they? This question ploughs deeper than any which moves under an impulse of mere historic curiosity: and it is *practically* the main question. Knowing the true, instant, operative cause, already we know something of the remedy;—having sure information as to the ringleaders, we are enabled at once to read their motives in the past, to anticipate their policy in the future;—having the *persons* indicated, those who first incited or encouraged the felonious agents, we can shorten the course of public vengeance; and in no vast a field of action can give a true direction from the first to the pursuit headed by our Indian police. For that should never be laid out of sight—that against rebels whose *least* offence is their rebellion, against men who have massacred by torture women and children, the service of extermination belongs of right to executioners armed with whips and rods, with the *lassos* of South America for noosing them, and, being noosed, with halters to hang them.* It

* '*To hang them:*'—But with a constant notification that, *after* hanging, the criminals would be decapitated: otherwise the threat loses its sting. It seems to be a superstition universal amongst Southern Asiatics, unless possibly amongst the Malay race, that to suffer any dismemberment of the body operates disastrously upon the fate in the unseen world. And

should be made known by proclamation to the sepoys, that *de jure*, in strict interpretation of the principle concerned, they are hunted by the hangman; and that the British army, whilst obliged by the vast scale of the outrages to join in this hangman's chase, feel themselves dishonoured, and called to a work which properly is the inheritance of the gallows; and yet, again, become reconciled to the work, as the purgation of an earth polluted by the blood of the innocent.

Who then, again I ask—who are those that, after seven months' watching of the revolt, appeared, by any plausible construction of events, to have been the primal movers in this hideous convulsion? Individual opinions on this question, and such as could plead a weight of authority in regard to experience, to local advantages for conjecture, and to official opportunities for overlooking intercepted letters, there have been many; and at first (say from May 10 to the end of June), in the absence of any strong counter-arguments, some of these were entitled to the full benefit of their *personal* weight (such weight, I mean, as could be drawn from the position or from the known

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hence, no doubt, it has arisen that the gallows is not viewed in the light of a degrading punishment. Immunity from mutilation compensates any ignominy which might else attend it. Accordingly, we see in China that the innumerable victims of the present rebellion, captured in the vast province of Quantung by the cruel Yeh, were all beheaded by the sword in the blood-reeking privacies of Canton. And two centuries back, when the native dynasty was overthrown by the last Tartar invasion, the reigning emperor (having unlimited freedom of choice) ended his career by a halter: retiring to his orchard, he hanged both himself and his daughter.

character of him who announced the opinion). But now—namely, on the 15th of December (or, looking to India, say the 10th of November)—we are entitled to something weightier. And what *is* there which generally would be held weightier? First, there are the confessions of dying criminals;—I mean, that, logically, we must reserve such a head, as likely to offer itself sooner or later. Tempers vary as to obduracy, and circumstances vary. All men will not share in the obstinacy of partisan pride; or not, by many degrees, equally. And again, some amongst the many thousands who leave families will have favours to ask. They all know secretly the perfect trustworthiness of the British Government. And when matters have come to a case of choice between a wife and children, in the one scale, and a fraternity consciously criminal, in the other, it may be judged which is likely to prevail. What through the coercion of mere circumstances—what through the entreaties of wife and children, co-operating with such circumstances—or sometimes through weakness of nature, or through relenting of compunction—it is not to be doubted that, as the cohesion of party begins rapidly to relax under approaching ruin, there will be confessions in abundance. For as yet, under the timid policy of the sepoys—hardly ever venturing out of cover, either skulking amongst bushy woodlands, or sneaking into house-shelter, or slinking back within the range of their great guns—it has naturally happened that our prisoners have been exceedingly few. But the decisive battle before Lucknow will tell us another story. There will at last be cavalry to *reap* the harvest when our soldiery have won it. The

prisoners will begin to accumulate by thousands; executions will proceed through week after week; and a large variety of cases will yield us a commensurate crop of confessions. These, when they come, will tell us, no doubt, most of what the sepoys can be supposed to know. But, meantime, how much is *that?* Too probably, except in the case of here and there some specially intelligent or specially influential sepoy officer, indispensable as a go-between to the non-military conspirators moving in darkness behind the rebel army, nothing at all was communicated to the bulk of the privates, beyond the mere detail of movements required by the varying circumstantialities of each particular case. But of the ultimate purpose, of the main strategic policy, or of the transcendent interests over-riding the narrow counsels that fell under the knowledge of the illiterate soldier, since no part was requisite to the fulfilment of each man's separate duty, no part would be communicated. It is barely possible that so much light as may be won from confessions, combined with so much further light as may be supposed to lurk amongst the mass of unexamined papers left behind them by the rebels at Delhi, might tell us something important. But any result to be expected from the Delhi papers is a doubtful contingency. It is uncertain whether they will ever be brought under the review of zeal united to sagacity sufficient for sustaining a search purely disinterested. Promising no great triumph for any literary purpose, proving as little, perhaps, one way or other, as the mathematician in the old story complained that the *Æneid* proved—these papers, unless worked by an enamoured bookworm (or paperworm),

will probably be confiscated to some domestic purpose of singeing chickens or lighting fires.

But, in any case, whether speaking by confessions or by the varied memoranda (orders to ministers officers, resolutions adopted by meetings, records of military councils, petitions, or suggestions on the public service, addressed to the king, &c.) abandoned in the palace at Delhi, the soldier can tell no more than he knew, which, under any theory of the case, must have been very little. Better, therefore, than all expectations fixed on the vile soldiery, whom, in every sense, and in all directions, I believe to have been brutally ignorant, and through their ignorance mainly to have been used as blind servile instruments · better and easier it would be to examine narrowly whether, in the whole course and evolution of this stupendous tragedy, there may not be found some characterising feature or distinguishing incident, that may secretly report the agency, and betray, by the style and character of the workmanship, who might be the particular class of workmen standing at the centre of this unparalleled conspiracy. I think that we stand in this dilemma: either, on the one hand, that the miserable sepoys, who were the sole acting managers, were also the sole contrivers of the plot—in which case we can look for further light only to the judicial confessions; or, on the other hand, that an order of agents far higher in rank than any subaltern members of our army, and who were enabled by this rank and corresponding wealth to use these soldiers as their dupes and tools, stood in the background, holding the springs of the machinery in their hands, with a view to purposes transcending by

far any that could ever suggest themselves to persons of obscure station, having no prospect of benefiting by their own fullest success. In this case, we shall learn nothing from the confessions of those who must, upon a principle of mere self-preservation, have been excluded from all real knowledge of the dreadful scheme to which they were made parties, simply as perpetrators of its murders and outrages. Here it is equally vain to look for revelations from the mercenary workers, who know nothing, or from the elevated leaders, who know all, but have an interest of life and death in dissembling their knowledge. Revelations of any value from those who cannot, and from those who will not, reveal the ambitious schemes communicated to a very few, are alike hopeless. In default of these, let us examine if any one incident, or class of incidents, in the course of these horrors, may not have made a self-revelation—a silent but significant revelation, pointing the attention of men to the true authors, and simultaneously to the final purposes, of this mysterious conspiracy.

Now, it has not escaped the notice of many people that two most extraordinary classes of outrages, perpetrated or attempted, have marked a very large majority of the mutinous explosions; outrages that were in the last degree unnatural, as out of harmony with the whole temper and spirit of intercourse generally prevailing between the sepoys and their British officers. The case is peculiarly striking. No reproach on the character of their manners was ever alleged against their British officers by any section or subdivision of the sepoy soldiery. Indeed, the reproach, where any existed, ran in the very opposite

channel. Too great indulgence to the sepoy, a spirit of concession too facile to their very whims and caprices, and generally too relaxed a state of discipline—these features it was of the British bearing towards the native soldiery which too often, and reasonably, provoked severe censures from the observing. The very case* which I adduced some months back, where an intelligent British officer, in the course of his evidence before some court-martial, mentioned, in illustration of the decaying discipline, that for some considerable space of time he had noticed a growing disrespect on the part of the privates; in particular, that, on coming into the cantonments of his own regiment, the men had ceased to rise from their seats, and took no notice of his presence—this one anecdote sufficiently exemplified the quality of the errors prevailing in the deportment of our countrymen to their native soldiery; and that it would be ludicrous to charge them with any harshness or severity of manner. Such being too notoriously the case, whence could possibly arise the bloody carnage by which, in almost every case, the sepoys inaugurated, or tried to inaugurate, their emancipation from British rule? Our continental neighbours at first grossly misinterpreted the case; and more excusably than in many other misinterpretations. Certainly it was unavoidable at first to read, in this frenzy of bloodshed, the vindictive retaliations of men

* This case was entirely misapprehended by a journalist who happened to extract the passage. He understood me to mean that this particular mode of disrespect to their British officers had operated as a *cause* of evil; whereas I alleged it simply as an evidence and exponent of evil habits criminally tolerated amongst the very lowest orders of our mercenary troops.

that had suffered horrible and ineffable indignities at our hands. It was apparently the old case of African slaves in some West Indian colony—St. Domingo, for instance—breaking loose from the yoke, and murdering (often with cruel torments) the whole households of their oppressors. But a month dissipated these groundless commentaries. The most prejudiced Frenchman could not fail to observe that no sepoy regiment ever alluded to any rigour of treatment, or any haughtiness of demeanour. His complaints centred in the one sole subject of religion; even as to which he did not generally pretend to any certain knowledge, but simply to a very strong belief or persuasion that we secretly meditated, not that we openly avowed or deliberately pursued, a purpose of coercing him into Christianity. This, were it even true, though a false and most erroneous policy, could not be taxed with ill-will. A man's own religion, if it is sincerely such, is that which he profoundly believes to be the truth. Now, in seeking to inoculate another with that which sincerely he believes to be eminently the truth, though proceeding by false methods, a man acts in a spirit of benignity. So that, on all hands, the hellish fury of the sepoy was felt to be unnatural, artificially assumed, and, by a reasonable inference, was held to be a mask for something else that he wished to conceal. But what? What was that something else which he wished to conceal? The sepoy simulated, in order that he might dissimulate. He pretended a wrong sustained, that he might call away attention from a wrong which he designed. At this point I (and no doubt in company with multitudes beside that had watched the case) became

sensible of an alien presence secretly intruding into this pretended quarrel of the native soldier. It was no sepoy that was moving at the centre of this feud: the objects towards which it ultimately tended were not such as could by possibility interest the poor, miserable, idolatrous native. What was *he* to gain by the overthrow of the British Government? The poor simpleton, who had been decoyed into this monstrous field of strife, opened the game by renouncing all the vast advantages which he and his children to the hundredth generation might draw from the system of the Company, and entered upon a career towards distant objects that for *him* have absolutely no meaning or intelligible existence. At this point it was that two enigmas, previously insoluble, suddenly received the fullest explanation :—

1. What was the meaning of that hellish fury suddenly developed towards officers with whom previously the sepoy had lived on terms of reciprocal amity?

2. What cause had led to that incomprehensible enmity manifested, in the process of these ferocious scenes, towards the wives and children of the officers? Surely, if his wish were to eliminate their families from the Indian territory, that purpose was sufficiently secured by the massacre of him whose exertions obtained a livelihood for the rest of the household.

It was tolerably certain that the widows and their children would not remain much longer in the Indian territory, when it no longer offered them an asylum or a livelihood. Now, since personally, and viewed apart from their husbands, these ladies could have no

interest for the murdering sepoys, it became more and more unintelligible on what principle, steady motive, or fugitive impulse, these incarnate demons could persist in cherishing any feeling whatever to those poor, ruined women, who, when their anchorage should be cut away by the murder of their husbands, would become mere waifs and derelicts stranded upon the Indian shores.

These had seemed at first two separate mysteries not less hard to decipher than the primal mystery of the mutiny itself. But now all became clear; whatsoever might be the composition, or character, or final objects of that tyranny which had decoyed the sepoys under its yoke, one thing was certain—namely, that the childishness and levity of the Hindoo sepoy made it difficult in excess to gain any lasting hold over his mind, or consequently to count upon his lasting services. But to this general difficulty there had now supervened one signal aggravation, in a shape hateful to those who encountered it—namely, the attractions of the British service, which service would be no sooner abjured than it would be passionately regretted. Here lay the rock which threatened the free movement of the insurrection. It was evidently determined by those who meant to appropriate the services of the sepoys, that they should have no retreat, no opening for recovering a false step, in the well-known mercy of the British Government. For *them* it was resolved that there should be no *locus penitentiæ* left open. In order to close for ever that avenue to all hope of forgiveness, the misleaders of the soldiery urged them into those atrocities which every nation upon earth has heard of with horror.

The mere fact of these atrocities indicates at once the overruling influence of such men as Nena Sahib, determined to place a bar of everlasting separation between the native army and that government which might else have reclaimed the erring men, had their offences lain within the reach of lawful forgiveness. The conspirators having thus divorced the ruling power, as they idly flattered themselves, from all martial resources, doubtless assumed the work of revolution already finished by midsummer-day of this present year. And this account of the course through which that attempted revolution travelled—according to which, not the sepoys, who could have had no ambition such as is implied in that attempt, but Indian princes and rajahs, standing in the background, were the true originators of the movement—finds an indirect justification of its own accuracy in the natural solution which it furnishes to those infernal massacres, which else, as they must remain for ever without a parallel, will also remain for ever without an intelligible motive. These atrocities were exacted from the sepoys by the conclave of princes as tests of their sincerity. Such doubtless was the argument for this exaction, the ostensible plea put forward to the miserable reptiles who were seduced into this treason, by the promise no doubt of sharing in the fruits of the new and mighty revolution. Such pleas were for the sepoy. But for himself and his own secret benefit the princely seducer needed all that he could obtain of such accursed acts, as the means sure and sudden of making the separation between the soldier and the government more and more irreparable.

So much for the massacre of his officers: but a

different reason availed for the more diabolical outrages upon women and their children. The murder of the *men* was extorted from the sepoy as a kind of sacrifice. With *them* the reptile had lived upon terms of humanising intercourse; and, vile as he was, in many cases this must have slowly ripened into some mode of regard and involuntary esteem; so that, in murdering the man, oftentimes a sepoy was making a real (if trifling) sacrifice. But for females he cared nothing at all. And in my opinion they perished on a very different principle. The male murders were levied as pledges for the benefit of the princes, and very distinctly understood to be levied *against* the wishes of the sepoy. But in the female sacrifice all parties concurred — sepoy and prince, tempted and tempter alike. I require you to murder this officer, as a pledge of your real hostility (which else might be a pure pretence) to the government. But the murder of the officer's wife and child rested on a motive totally different—namely, this:—Throughout Hindostan no feature in the moral aspects of the British nature could have been so conspicuous or so impressive as the tenacity of purpose, the persistency, and the dogged resolution never to relax a grasp once taken. Consequently, had the *men* of our nation, and they separately from the women, scattered themselves here and there over the land (as they have long done in China, for instance), then, perhaps, the natives, when finding themselves in conflict with this well-known principle of imperishable tenacity, would be liable to a sentiment of despair, as in a contest with fate. And that sentiment would paralyse the Hindoos when entering upon a struggle for unrooting

the British from Hindostan. But here suddenly, Woman steps in to aid the Hindoo. For the Briton, it is notorious, would never loosen his hold, more than his compatriot the bull-dog. But that scene which a man had faced steadily upon his own account, he shrinks from as a husband or a father. Hence the sepoy attacks upon women and children.

From hurried writing, it is to be feared that I may have done slight justice to my own views. Let me conclude this head therefore by briefly *resuming*.

The argument for tracing back the great conspiracy to the discontented rajahs is—that otherwise, and supposing the mutiny raised for objects specially affecting the sepoys, they would *not* have massacred their officers. *They* must have desired to leave an opening for pardon in the event of failure. That crime was exacted to compromise the native army effectually with the government. But this in many ways was sure to operate ruinously for the sepoy interests, and could therefore have found a sufficient motive only with the native princes.

But the *female* sacrifice was welcome to all parties. For no doubt they represented the British officer as saying:—So long as the danger affected only myself, I would never have relaxed my hold on India; but now, when the war threatens our women and children, India can no longer be a home for *us*.

Another urgent question concerns the acts of the Bengal Government. Many unfounded charges, as in a case of infinite confusion and hourly pressure, must be aimed at the Governor-General: the probability of such charges, and the multiplied experience of such charges, makes reasonable men cautious

—in fact, unduly so; and the excess of caution reacts upon Lord Canning's estimation too advantageously. Lord Dalhousie is missed; his energy would have shown itself conspicuously by this time. For surely in such a case as the negotiation with Bahadoor Jung of Nepaul, as to the Ghoorkas, there can be no doubt *at present*, though a great doubt, unfairly indulgent to Lord Canning, was encouraged at first, that most imbecile oscillation governed the Calcutta counsels. And it is now settled that this oscillation turned entirely upon a petty personal motive. A subordinate officer had accepted the Nepaul offer, and by that unauthorised acceptance had intruded upon the prerogative of Lord Canning. The very same cause —this jealous punctiliousness of exacting vanity, and not any wish to enforce the severities of public justice—interfered to set aside the proclamation of Mr. Colvin at Agra. The insufficiency again of the steps taken as to Nena Sahib speaks the same language. In this very journal, full six weeks earlier than in the Calcutta proclamation, the offer of a large sum * for this man's head had been suggested. That offer was never kept sufficiently before the public eye. But a grosser neglect than this, as affecting the condition of many thousands, and not of any single villain, was the non-employment of the press in pursuing the steps of the mutineers. Everywhere, as fast as they appeared in any strength, brief handbills

* And imperfectly as the offer was advertised, it seems to have had considerable effect. Apparently it has extinguished the Nena's power to show himself, and to move about with freedom. He is now distrustful and jealous—often no doubt with very little reason.

should have been circulated — circumstantially relating their defeats, exposing their false pretences, and describing their prospects. Once only the government attempted such a service; and blundered so far as to urge against the sepoys a reproach which must have been unintelligible both to them and to all native readers.

Again, a question even more practical and instant arises as to the modes of public vengeance.

1. If, when finally defeated, and in a military sense destroyed, on some signal field of battle, the mutineers should fly to the hills in the great ranges, or the jungle, the main fear would arise not from *them*, but from the weak compromising government, that would show itself eager to treat, and make what the Roman law calls a *transactio*, or half-and-half settlement with any body of sepoys that showed a considerable strength. But, in such a case, besides that the rebels, having now no Delhi, will have scanty ammunition, our best resource would be found in the Spanish bloodhounds of Cuba, which we British used fifty years back for hunting down the poor negro Maroons in Jamaica, who were not by a thousand degrees so criminal as the sepoys.

2. That no wrong is done to the Bengal Government by this anticipation of an eventual compromise, may be judged by the assertion (resting apparently on adequate authority), that even at this hour that government are making it a subject for deliberation and doubt—whether the sepoys have forfeited their pensions! Doubtless, the Delhi and Cawnpore exploits merit good-service pensions for life!

3. Others by millions, who come to these questions

in a far nobler spirit, fear that at any rate, and with every advantage for a righteous judgment, too many of the worst sepoys laden with booty may find means to escape. To these I would suggest that, after all, the appropriate, worst, and most hellish of punishments for hellish malefactors, is mortification and utter ruin in every one of their schemes. What is the thrust of a bayonet or the deepest of sabre-cuts? These are over in a few moments. And I with others rejoiced therefore that so many escaped from Delhi for prolonged torment. That torment will be found in the ever-rankling deadly mortification of knowing that in all things they and their wicked comrades have failed; and that in the coming spring, and amongst the resurrections of spring, when all will be finished, and the mighty storm will have wheeled away, there remains for the children of hell only this surviving consciousness—that the total result has been the awakening of our Indian Government, and the arming it for ever against a hideous peril, that might else have overwhelmed it unprepared in an hour of slumbering weakness. Such a game is played but once; and, having failed, never again can it be repeated.

ON NOVELS.

(*Two pages written in a Lady's Album.**)

A FALSE ridicule has settled upon Novels, and upon Young Ladies as the readers of novels. Love, we are told authoritatively, has not that importance in the actual practice of life—nor that extensive influence upon human affairs—which novel-writers postulate, and which the interest of novels presumes. Something to this effect has been said by an eminent writer; and the law is generally laid down upon these principles by cynical old men, and envious blue-stockings who have outlived their personal attractions. The sentiment however is false even for the present condition of society; and it will become continually *more* false as society improves. For what is the great commanding event, the one sole revolution, in a woman's life? Marriage. Viewing her course from the cradle to the grave in the light of a drama, I am entitled to say that her wedding-day is its catastrophe —or, in technical language, its *peripeteia:* whatever else is important to her in succeeding years has its origin in that event. So much for *that* sex. For the other, it is admitted that Love is not, in the same

* This was published in *facsimile* from the Original MS. in *The Archivist and Autograph Review*, edited by S. Davey, F.R.S L.—June, 1888. [H.]

exclusive sense, the governing principle under which their lives move: but what then are the concurrent forces, which sometimes happen to coöperate with that agency—but more frequently disturb it? They are two; Ambition, and Avarice. Now for the vast majority of men—Ambition, or the passion for personal distinction, has too narrow a stage of action, its grounds of hope are too fugitive and unsteady, to furnish any durable or domineering influence upon the course of life. Avarice again is so repulsive to the native nobility of the human heart, that it rarely obtains the dignity of a passion: great energy of character is requisite to form a consistent and accomplished miser: and of the mass of men it may be said —that, if the beneficence of nature has in some measure raised them *above* avarice by the necessity of those social instincts which she has impressed upon their hearts, in some measure also they sink *below* it by their deficiencies in that austerity of self-denial and that savage strength of will which are indispensable qualifications for the *rôle* of heroic miser. A perfect miser in fact is a great man, and therefore a very rare one. Take away then the two forces of Ambition and Avarice,—what remains even to the male sex as a capital and overruling influence in life, except the much nobler force of Love? History confirms this view: the self-devotions and the voluntary martyrdoms of all other passions collectively have been few by comparison with those which have been offered at the altar of Love. If society should ever make any great advance, and man as a species grow conspicuously nobler, Love also will grow nobler; and a passion, which at present is possible in any

elevated form for one perhaps in a hundred, will then be coëxtensive with the human heart.

On this view of the grandeur which belongs to the passion of Sexual Love in the economy of life, as it is and as it may be, Novels have an all-sufficient justification; and Novel-readers are obeying a higher and more philosophic impulse than they are aware of. They seek an imaginary world where the harsh hindrances, which in the real one too often fret and disturb the 'course of true love,' may be forced to bend to the claims of justice and the pleadings of the heart. In company with the agitations and the dread suspense—the anguish and the tears, which so often wait upon the uncertainties of earthly love, they demand at the hands of the Novelist a final event corresponding to the natural award of celestial wisdom and benignity. What they are striving after, in short, is—to realize an ideal; and to reproduce the actual world under more harmonious arrangements. This is the secret craving of the reader; and Novels are shaped to meet it. With what success, is a separate and independent question: the execution cannot prejudice the estimate of their aim and essential purpose.

Fair and unknown Owner of this Album, whom perhaps I have never seen—whom perhaps I never *shall* see, pardon me for wasting two pages of your elegant manual upon this semi-metaphysical disquisition. Let the subject plead my excuse. And believe that I am, Fair Incognita!

Your faithful servant,

THOMAS DE QUINCEY.

Professor Wilson's—Glocester Place, Edinburgh.
Friday night, December 8, 1830.

DE QUINCEY'S PORTRAIT.

THE only one which can be considered satisfactory is that of which a copy is prefixed to these Volumes. It is from a steel engraving by Frank Croll, taken at Edinburgh from a daguerreotype by Howie in 1850.

DE QUINCEY'S own opinion of it is expressed to me in the amusing letter which was published in *The Instructor* (New Series, vol. vi. p. 145).

TO THE EDITOR OF *THE INSTRUCTOR*.

September 21, 1850.

MY DEAR SIR,—I am much obliged to you for communicating to us (that is, to my daughters and myself) the engraved portrait, enlarged from the daguerreotype original. The engraver, at least, seems to have done his part ably. As to one of the earlier artists concerned, viz. the sun of July, I suppose it is not allowable to complain of *him*, else my daughters are inclined to upbraid him with having made the mouth too long. But, of old, it was held audacity to suspect the sun's veracity:—'Solem quis dicere falsum audeat!' And I remember that, half a century ago, the *Sun* newspaper, in London, used to fight under

sanction of that motto. But it was at length discovered by the learned, that Sun *junior*, viz. the newspaper, *did* sometimes indulge in fibbing. The ancient prejudice about the solar truth broke down, therefore, in that instance; and who knows but Sun *senior* may be detected, now that our optical glasses are so much improved, in similar practices? in which case he may have only been 'keeping his hand in' when operating upon that one feature of the mouth. The rest of the portrait, we all agree, does credit to his talents, showing that he is still wide-awake, and not at all the superannuated old artist that some speculators in philosophy had dreamed of his becoming.

As an accompaniment to this portrait, your wish is that I should furnish a few brief chronological memoranda of my own life. *That* would be hard for me to do, and *when* done, might not be very interesting for others to read. Nothing makes such dreary and monotonous reading as the old hackneyed roll-call, chronologically arrayed, of inevitable facts in a man's life. One is so certain of the man's having been born, and also of his having died, that it is dismal to lie under the necessity of reading it. That the man began by being a boy—that he went to school—and that, by intense application to his studies, 'which he took to be *his* portion in this life,' he rose to distinction as a robber of orchards, seems so probable, upon the whole, that I am willing to accept it as a postulate. That he married—that, in fulness of time, he was hanged, or (being a humble, unambitious man) that he was content with deserving it—these little circumstances are so naturally to be looked for, as sown

broadcast up and down the great fields of biography, that any one life becomes, in this respect, but the echo of thousands. Chronologic successions of events and dates, such as these, which, belonging to the race, illustrate nothing in the individual, are as wearisome as they are useless.

A better plan will be—to detach some single chapter from the experiences of childhood, which is likely to offer, at least, this kind of value—either that it will record some of the deep impressions under which my childish sensibilities expanded, and the ideas which at that time brooded continually over my mind, or else will expose the traits of character that slumbered in those around me. This plan will have the advantage of not being liable to the suspicion of vanity or egotism; for I beg the reader to understand distinctly, that I do not offer this sketch as deriving any part of what interest it may have from myself, as the person concerned in it. If the particular experience selected is really interesting, in virtue of its own circumstances, then it matters not to *whom* it happened. Suppose that a man should record a perilous journey, it will be no fair inference that he records it as a journey performed by himself. Most sincerely he may be able to say, that he records it not *for* that relation to himself, but *in spite of* that relation. The incidents, being absolutely independent, in their power to amuse, of all personal reference, must be equally interesting [he will say] whether they occurred to A or to B. That is *my* case. Let the reader abstract from *me* as a person that by accident, or in some partial sense, may have been previously known to himself. Let him read the sketch

as belonging to one who wishes to be profoundly anonymous. I offer it not as owing anything to its connection with a particular individual, but as likely to be amusing separately for itself; and if I make any mistake in *that*, it is not a mistake of vanity exaggerating the consequence of what relates to my own childhood, but a simple mistake of the judgment as to the power of amusement that may attach to a particular succession of reminiscences.

Excuse the imperfect development which in some places of the sketch may have been given to my meaning. I suffer from a most afflicting derangement of the nervous system, which at times makes it difficult for me to write at all, and always makes me impatient, in a degree not easily understood, of recasting what may seem insufficiently, or even incoherently, expressed.—Believe me, ever yours,

THOMAS DE QUINCEY.

This letter was a preface to 'A Sketch from Childhood,' of which the first and second parts appeared in that Volume.

After this came a blank of six months—a whole Volume containing nothing. In Volume VIII. (January, 1852), 'A Sketch from Childhood' was resumed with the following whimsical apology. It then ran for five months consecutively:—

(*January*, 1852.)

I UNDERSTAND that several readers of my *Sketch from Childhood* have lodged complaints against me for not having pursued it to what they can regard as a

satisfactory close. Some may have done this in a gentle tone, as against an irreclaimable procrastinator, amiably inclined, perhaps, to penitence, though constitutionally incapable of amendment; but others more clamorously, as against one faithless to his engagements, and deliberately a defaulter. Themselves they regard in the light of creditors, and me as a slippery debtor, who, having been permitted to pay his debts by instalments—three, suppose, or four—has paid two, and then absconded in order to evade the rest. Certainly to this extent I go along with them myself, that, in all cases of a tale or story moving through the regular stages of a plot, the writer, by the act of publishing the introductory parts, pledges himself to unweave the whole tissue to the last. The knot that he has tied, though it should prove a very Gordian knot, he is bound to untie. And, if he fails to do so, I doubt whether a reader has not a right of action against him for having wantonly irritated a curiosity that was never meant to be gratified—for having trifled with his feelings—and, possibly, for having distressed and perplexed his moral sense; as, for instance, by entangling the hero and heroine (two young people that can be thoroughly recommended for virtue) in an Irish bog of misfortunes, and there leaving them to their fate—the gentleman up to his shoulders, and the poor lady, therefore, in all probability up to her lips. But, in a case like the present, where the whole is offered as a *sketch*, an action would not lie. A sketch, by its very name, is understood to be a fragmentary thing: it is a *torso*, which may want the head, or the feet, or the arms, and still

remain a marketable piece of sculpture. In buying a horse, you may look into his mouth, but not in buying a *torso:* for, if all his teeth have been gone for ten centuries, which would certainly operate in the way of discount upon the price of a horse, very possibly the loss would be urged as a good ground for an *extra* premium upon the torso. Besides, it is hard to see how any proper *end* could be devised for a paper of this nature, reciting a few incidents, sad and gay, from the records of a half-forgotten childhood, unless by putting the child to death; for which dénouement, unhappily, there was no solid historical foundation.

Right or wrong, however, my accusers are entitled to my gratitude; since in the very fact of their anger is involved a compliment. By proclaiming their indignation against the procrastinating or absconding sketcher, they proclaim their interest in the sketch; and, therefore, if any fierce Peter Peebles should hang upon my skirts, haling me back to work, and denouncing me to the world as a fugitive from my public duties, I shall not feel myself called upon to contradict him. As often as he nails me with the charge of being a skulker from work *in meditatione fugæ*, I shall turn round and nail *him* with the charge of harbouring an intense admiration for me, and putting a most hyperbolical value upon my services; or else why should he give himself so much trouble, after so many months are gone by, in pursuing and recapturing me? On this principle, I shall proceed with others who may have joined the cry of the accusers, obediently submitting to their

pleasure, doing my best, therefore, to supply a conclusion which in my own eyes had not seemed absolutely required, and content to bear the utmost severity of their censure as applied to myself, the workman, in consideration of the approbation which that censure carries with it by implication to the work itself.

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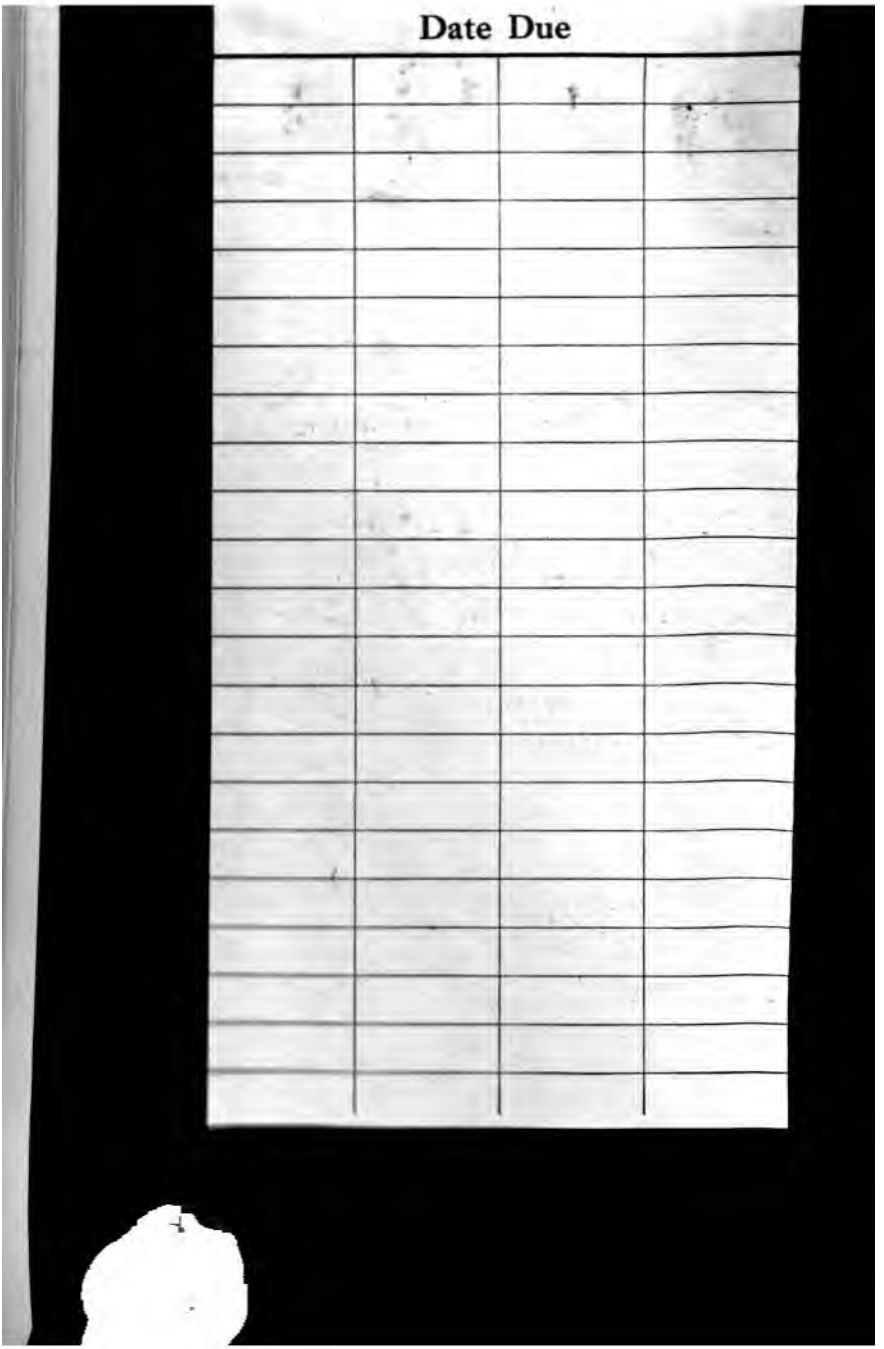
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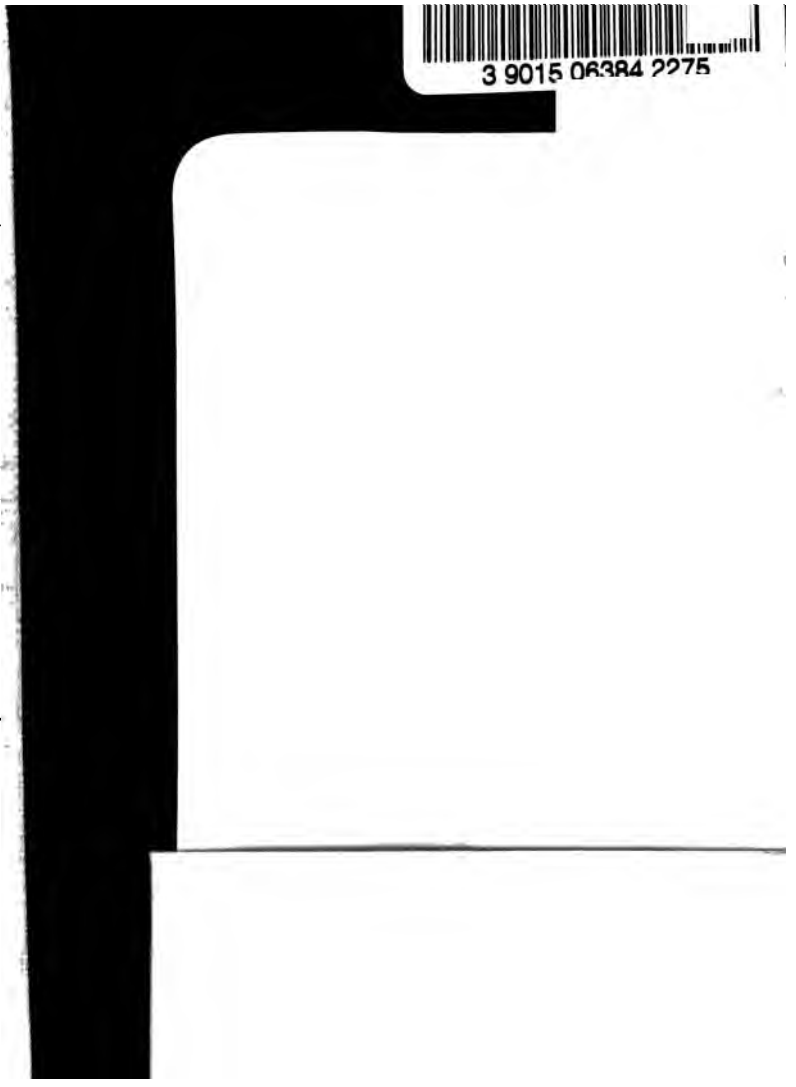
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